

St Colman's Primary School



Pastoral Care Policy

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ST. COLMAN'S PS

Introduction:

“Joined by Faith, Encouraged to Succeed”

In St. Colman's PS we exist as a school family and an extension of home. Everything we do is for the betterment of our children. The children's needs, current and future are paramount. This Pastoral care Policy is one of a suite of “Pastoral Policies” and should be viewed in that context.

Related policies include but are not limited to:

- SEN
- Child Protection
- Anti-Bullying in School
- Intimate Care
- E-Safety
- Acceptable Use of the Internet
- Safe Handling
- Promoting Positive Behaviour

In forming this policy, we have used guidance from

DENI Circular 2017/07 (Updated Sept 2023)

“Safeguarding and Child Protection in Schools-

A Guide for Schools.”

Rationale

An effective Pastoral Care system is required because of the rapid changes which are taking place in society. Children require all the skills necessary to deal with the rising pressures of media, growing up, family, education, stress and peer pressure that they encounter in their daily lives.

In St Colman's we believe that effective Pastoral Care should contribute to the creation of a supportive atmosphere for the whole school community.



Definition

Pastoral Care is composed of different policies, actions and procedures that encourage each individual child to develop their full potential by catering for their spiritual, moral, emotional, intellectual, physical and social needs, in a safe and secure environment.

Each child will be encouraged to develop personal, social and academic skills to prepare them for the “outside world” and to promote the joy of **“Living Life to the Full.”**

Aims

At St. Colman’s we are aware of the need to help our children manage their present lives, as well as to help them prepare for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adulthood, so we aim to provide for the development of the pupil as a person as well as a learner.

1. We aim to develop our pupils “*life skills*” – critical thinking, decision making, effective communication, learning from mistakes, resilience, all so necessary for health, well-being, and safety in today’s society.
2. We aim to guide and advise our pupils on personal and educational matters, and we seek to build up a community of children who care about each other and show respect for themselves and others.
3. The staff of St. Colman’s aims to build a special relationship with, and a knowledge of, the children in their care and thus attempt to remove any barriers to their holistic development.
4. Contributions to the pastoral work of the class teacher and other staff will come from their partnership with colleagues, local priests, educational welfare officers, community police, school nurse and other outside agencies.
5. We aim to promote a partnership and close working relationship with parents/guardians whose views and wishes as prime carers will be heard and respected to enable us to support their children’s learning.
6. We aim to offer a framework of values and positive behaviours enabling our children to be self-reliant, motivated, self-disciplined, generous and sympathetic to others and to make good choices in a moral context.



Specific Issues

Ethos

In St Colman's we nurture an atmosphere of family, togetherness, mutual respect and co-operation which will contribute to the learning process and generate a positive climate within our school family where every individual feels valued and cared for.

Relationships

Many people are interacting daily within the school and consequently a wide range of relationships exist. As a school we will endeavour to promote positive, open relationships in both formal and informal situations.

The school recognises that regular, effective communication is crucial in Pastoral Care and positive relationships will be promoted between: -

- Board of Governors – School
- Principal – Staff
- Staff – Staff
- Staff – Pupils
- Pupils – Pupils
- Parents-Parents
- School – Parents
- School – External Agencies/Community



The Experience of Pastoral Care for All

For our Children: *The adult school personnel will:*

1. Encourage respect for self and others
2. Promote courteous behaviour to everyone
3. Develop positive relationships among peers and adults
4. Be consistent and fair so that children will feel secure and know the parameters within which they must engage
5. Be an instrument for advice and guidance
6. Be a support in times of difficulty
7. Accept and empathise with the unique experience of each child
8. Model expected standards and behaviours

For our Staff: *All staff will be always afforded consideration and respect.*

1. We respect their individual dignity
2. Are a supportive, affirming community of fellow workers
3. Provide opportunities to develop personally and professionally
4. Promote a tolerance of their areas for development
5. We share strengths and talents
6. Support their rights to feel safe in their workplace

For our Parents/Guardians: *Our parents/guardians will be treated as key to our school and will:*

1. Be involved fully in the pastoral care of the school community
2. Enjoy positive relationships with all school personnel
3. Be made aware of the arrangements whereby they may meet with staff
4. Be confident of a welcome
5. Be partners with staff in supporting the children
6. Maintain good lines of communication with the school
7. Support and promote school policies and procedures



Values

Every opportunity will be taken to praise our pupils for their contributions to the life of the school. Through positive daily experiences, in addition to curricular activities, we aim to communicate the following positive values and beliefs: -

- Self-respect
- Honesty
- Tolerance
- Respect for others and their property
- Independence
- Co-operation
- Positive behaviour
- Reconciliation

Self-Esteem

St Colman's Primary School recognises that the most important aspect of education is the wholeness of the child. As a school we will encourage children to think positively about themselves and accept their own individuality. We believe that when a child's self-esteem is boosted then they feel valued in all aspects of school life.

Pupils will be supported in developing resilience - helping them to face and overcome the challenges life may bring them.

The school will aim to promote positive self-esteem and confidence as these develop the potential for good learning. Pupils will be involved in a range of activities thus allowing them to experience success and therefore giving the teachers an opportunity to praise each child.

Personal Safety

Childhood is a time of wonder, joy and discovery when children should be nurtured and loved so they can grow into caring adults. Part of the process of discovery and growth must also allow children to learn how to cope with potential dangers. The safe use of technology is an increasing challenge in society and in schools e.g., internet, online gaming, social media and mobile phones.

St Colman's aims to equip children with the knowledge and skills to make them less vulnerable, better aware of potential dangers and more self-confident in making informed and positive choices.



We have a robust E-Safety policy and use expert support agencies to upskill our children on protecting themselves in all uses of electronic communications.

Home/School Partnership

- School should be seen as an extension of the family
- School and home should be committed to a common ideal, namely the holistic development of each individual
- Adults at home and in school will be a positive role model for our children by working to the same end and displaying respect for each other at all times
- Links with other schools will be fostered to ensure the induction of our Primary 1 children and for the transition of our Primary 7 leavers to post-primary education when their time comes to leave us.

The School in the Community

Our aim will be to foster in our children an awareness of the wider community:

1. We will involve children in the support of charities and care for others
2. We will encourage participation in community activities

For example:

- Church & Parish activities
 - Cultural activities
 - Sporting activities
 - Musical celebrations
 - Drama work
 - ECO work
3. Our children will add to the life of the community e.g.
 - By reading at Mass
 - By presenting a Christmas Nativities or a Carol service
 - Displaying their efforts via the school website, Class Dojo
 - School performances
 - Supporting those less fortunate



Promotion of Positive Behaviour

Our Pastoral Care Policy will enhance pupil behaviour and good order by promoting:

1. Respect for Self and Others
2. Tolerance
3. Self-Discipline
4. Care For Your Community
5. Resilience
6. Looking Out for and caring for Others

Implementation

Roles and Responsibilities

- **The Board of Governors** has overall responsibility for Pastoral Care in the school.
- **The Principal**, Mr. Baine, has overall responsibility for promoting Pastoral Care and fostering positive relationships. In addition, he will review and update the policy, inform and liaise with parents and ensure Pastoral Care is forefront in the School's Development Plan. Good Pastoral Care is intertwined in all our work and is not viewed as a standalone area.
- **Our staff & Parents** have responsibility for promoting Pastoral Care by:
 - Helping children to make informed decisions
 - Promote consistent boundaries and supports
 - Celebrating success
 - Building up children's self-esteem and resilience
 - Offer opportunities to promote children's care and well being
 - Encouraging assertiveness
 - Encouraging sensitivity
 - Developing effective communication



- Listening to children when they require support

Our staff build up a knowledge of pupils as individuals and take an interest in their unique needs and indeed, all round development.

Monitoring and Evaluation

To ensure the Pastoral Care Policy is working effectively in our school, the policy procedures and practice will be kept under review. We value the contribution that can be made by our governors, staff, parents and pupils to effect the appropriate change when necessary.

This will be achieved by: -

- Listening to staff and pupils' concerns and acting on them
- Parents being encouraged to inform the school immediately if they have any concerns
- Application of all our Pastoral Care Policies
- Parent/Teacher Interview meetings
- Staff and Board of Governors meetings
- S.E.N. Team meetings
- Safeguarding Team Meetings
- Open Days
- Induction Days
- Information Evenings
- "The Friday Note/Sway"
- Availability of a formal Complaints' Policy
- Informal communications
- The School Website www.stcolmanslambeg.com

Staff Training

Training will be updated in relation to policies, procedures and pastoral issues and staff will be informed of Department of Education/EA changes.

All staff will avail of training opportunities and be involved in the update of policies and procedures.

Staff will attend relevant courses and disseminate learning to colleagues.



Staff days and directed time will be used for training as required.



Resourcing

Pastoral Care encompasses all areas of school life and is important in the development of the “whole” child. To ensure the implementation of the policy: -

- We value and are proud of our strong Catholic faith and ethos
- Strong, vibrant, effective Pastoral Care is planned for
- Relevant resources will be requisitioned for use in class
- Time is allocated for review, training and implementation change
- Development of Pastoral Care is integrated throughout the School Development Plan.
- The Board of Governors and Principal ensure the safety, maintenance and development of the school environment.
- We have invested in a pupil focused P1 to P7 PDMU Curricular Programme via Prim. Ed which will be used throughout the school.

Pastoral Activities

As a school we encourage pupils to participate in a range of activities to develop self-esteem and self-confidence.

Activities include sport, music, mindfulness, cycling proficiency and competitions amongst others.

Induction

Primary One

In St. Colman’s we recognise that coming to school for the first time is a very important and emotional step for parents and children alike. To assist in this transition P.1. children and their parents are invited to visit the school in June – prior to starting school in September. They are given a welcome pack which contains all relevant information for their parents including the name of their P1 teacher.

Children beginning in P1 are admitted on a staggered entry basis. Parents are then invited for a further meeting in the first term. This induction programme also provides an opportunity for parents to meet each other, and to become familiar



with relevant school policies and procedures and discuss how they can assist and support their children in Primary 1. Individual arrangements can be made to facilitate prospective parents and their children if the above-mentioned programme is inconvenient.

New Pupils

Parents of children transferring to St Colman's from other schools are given an appointment during which the **parents will meet the principal, tour the school and visit their new class.**

They will receive a Prospectus and any other documentation required.

The child/children changing schools **will meet their new teacher and then begin the next day** where they are introduced to their classmates. The Principal & LSCo/SENCO provide support in the transition of these children.

These arrangements are very crucially in place for **our new SLD & MLD specific children who form a central part of our school family.**

The school reviews extensively their SEN information and ensures these pupils transition as smoothly as possible to their new school.

Immediate IEPs and support arrangements are put in place and transition meetings are held with their parents.

St. Colman's recognises moving to a new school can be an emotional and somewhat traumatic experience for both children and their parents. - all support mechanisms are put in place to ensure the process is as smooth as possible.

Integration

Throughout their time with us our P3 to P7 children (who are based in the MLD support classes) enjoy a well-planned integration programme with their mainstream peers. This integration work combines curriculum activities alongside sporting, social and musical work. This allows for greater opportunities to broaden friendship groups and experience learning with others outside of their base classroom.

School Trips

The Health and Safety Provision for children participating in School Trips is of the utmost importance. Guidelines from D.O.E. will be adhered to. The school has an Educational Visits Policy which is centred upon the 2017 DENI Safeguarding Circular (Updated 2023) guidance produced by DE/EA.





Medication

The Principal and Staff are committed to supporting pupils with specific Medication Needs. Guidelines will be adhered to regarding the administration of medicine and the school has a robust policy in place for this work. Clarification for specific cases can be provided by the school Principal. Refer to the First Aid and Medicines Policy for details.

Charities

Statement of Raising funds for Charities

Aims

- To encourage a spirit of generosity and care for others
- To encourage children to look outside of their own needs and to think of others
- To give children a practical way of expressing charity

Strategy

We will have one/two major appeals per year. Other charitable causes may also be supported e.g., NSPCC, Simon Community – one-day appeals but on a smaller scale. The decision to support other appeals on a smaller scale will be taken as and when such decisions require to be made. This decision will be taken with:

The principal

The RE Coordinator

The PDMU Leader

An assistant teacher

We will have a balanced approach between a local charity, a third world charity for example. The other may be the result of an outside agency e.g., N.S.P.C.C. approaching school, or may be in response to an emergency or crisis e.g., a famine, or a charity suggested by a member of staff/parent. The selection of the charity for our third appeal of the year will be made on a whole staff basis early in the third term.

This policy like all our policies is reviewed on a rolling basis and as part of our self-evaluation procedures.

New learning and guidance will allow excellent opportunities to taper this important work.