



# Pastoral Care Policy - Carniny Primary School

## 1. Introduction

### (a) Rationale

This policy is set in the context of a changing society where there is less family stability, an increase in child abuse and greater challenges facing parents in raising children. Children are surrounded by unhealthy influences (emotional, physical and spiritual). To counter balance the effects of these we at Carniny Primary School believe that a Pastoral Care System which promotes a healthy lifestyle and positive attitudes is essential. This system encompasses the development of strategies to enable the children to make reasoned and rational decisions about situations. It also includes the provision of an environment where the children feel safe, secure and valued and where their concerns are listened to and acted upon when necessary. The Pastoral Care Policy at Carniny Primary School should ensure that children reach their full potential in every area of life.

### (b) Definitions

Pastoral Care is a set of systems and programmes in schools 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.

### (c) Aims

- To develop and sustain a caring and happy learning environment which promotes respect and co-operation within the school community and where children are socially at ease and educationally thriving.
- To make all staff aware of children's needs i.e. to notice unhappy, preoccupied, irritable, depressed children and to investigate unobtrusively.
- To foster relationships between school, parents and external agencies.

## **2. Specific Issues**

### **(a) Ethos**

The ethos of Carniny Primary School is achieved by the Principal, Senior Leadership Team and staff promoting and facilitating an atmosphere of care and respect within the formal and informal life of the school community. The School's logo "Caring and Learning" emphasises the importance placed on the pastoral aspect of school life alongside learning.

We aim to:

1. Have good relationships in the school
2. Have a strong ethos of Caring
3. Promote pupils' self-esteem and confidence
4. Utilise positive approaches, where possible, to promoting and maintaining good standards of discipline
5. Inform parents of our pastoral care arrangements

### **(b) Relationships**

The ethos of Carniny Primary School aims to promote a positive climate within the school community through fostering warm, positive, caring relationships among pupils and staff.

### **(c) Values**

Teachers will not only teach knowledge but impart values to enable pupils to cope with life in the outside world. (Refer to Drugs/Health Education Policies).

### **(d) Self-Esteem**

We aim to promote pupils' positive self-esteem in order that each child feels valued.

### **(e) Personal Safety**

We aim to promote each child's awareness of their responsibility for their own safety.

e.g.

- Saying no to people when they are afraid or unhappy
- Knowing where to get help
- Recognising dangerous situations
- Knowing that not all adults secrets and touch are good
- Safety in the playground, on the road, in water, in the sun.

### **3. Curriculum**

In Carniny Primary School much of the Pastoral Care is integrated into daily routines as well as specific areas of the curriculum such as Personal Development and Mutual Understanding (PDMU), Shared Education, Community Relations Equality and Diversity, Assemblies, World Around Us (WAU) and Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities (TSPC). It is also found within PE, RE and Talking and Listening topics.

### **4. Roles and Responsibilities**

All staff, both teaching and non-teaching have a responsibility to make sure the policy is implemented by:

- Helping pupils to make informed decisions about issues in terms of "right" and "wrong"
- Building up pupils' self-esteem
- Encouraging pupils to be assertive (This will help them to resist peer pressure)
- Avoiding use of sarcasm, belittling, humiliation etc.
- Celebrating individual successes and encouraging sensitivity and thoughtfulness in the school community.

The S.L.T. identify issues and if appropriate include them on the agenda for whole staff meetings or as part of the School Development Plan.

The Pastoral Care Co-ordinator (Principal) has the responsibility to monitor the implementation of the policy, to ensure there are adequate up to date resources available (subject to finances).

The Board of Governors has ultimate responsibility for ensuring that the pastoral care policy is in place and is implemented.

## **5. Scope of Pastoral Care**

The development of a safe, secure and caring environment is at the centre of our school ethos and is the responsibility of everyone who works there. It begins with the induction of new pupils and parents to school procedures through information booklets, Parent Handbooks, Open Days and Induction Days. The early establishment of procedures for the younger children is an essential first step in the development of their confidence and self-esteem and one which is constantly reinforced and built upon as the children progress through the school. Maintaining high standards of behaviour and self-discipline is central to the overall care system, as is the show of consideration for other children's feelings and well-being.

A House System, High Flier Awards, Golden Time and a Golden Book aim to promote in a positive way good behaviour and application to work.

The welfare of all the children in our care is of paramount importance. Teachers and children participate in the Heartstart programme and also promote and encourage healthy breaks at school. Our Rights Respecting School ethos guides good daily practice. Article 3 UNCRC "The best interests of the child must be a top priority in all actions concerning children".

Children will have the opportunity to attend Extra Curricular Activities to promote self-confidence, teamwork and positive relationships.

## **6. Supervision**

Children are supervised by teaching and non-teaching staff before school (8.30-8.45), at break time (10.45-11.00) and lunch time (12.00-1.00pm).

At the end of the school day children in P1-3 are handed over to parents/child minders. Older children who have provided written consent from their parents/guardians may walk or cycle home. Parents are requested to inform the school in writing of any changes to their children's collection arrangements.

After school activities and educational visits are carefully planned with a view to providing maximum safety and supervision. Parental consent for any out of school activity is always sought.

## **7. Liaison with Parents**

Parent Interviews are held in October and February each year and a written report is sent home in June. Parents or teachers may initiate a meeting at any time to discuss their child's progress or well-being. An appointment to talk to a child's teacher or the Principal may be made by contacting the school. Throughout each year a number of external support agencies visit the school regularly and on occasions meet with parents. These include the school's Educational Psychologist, EA advisers, Education Welfare Officers (EWO), Literacy Teaching Support Service (LTSS), Multi Agency Support Team for Schools (MASTS), School Doctor and Nurse, Local Clergy, PSNI and local charities. Many of these agencies have direct contact with the children sharing their expertise, information and guidance with him/her to promote their safety and protection.

## **8. Monitoring and Evaluating**

Both policy and practice are reviewed regularly as an on-going process during staff meetings. Daily observation by all staff and the communication of incidents keep teachers aware of the effectiveness of the pastoral care provision.

It will be necessary to hear the views of pupils, teachers and parents. This may be done through questionnaires and on a person/person basis. The outcomes of any self-evaluation may then result in updating the current school policy.

## **9. Staff Training**

Teaching and Support staff should be offered opportunity to attend in-service training on topics relating to pastoral care.

## **10. Resources**

The Pastoral Care Co-ordinator will ensure that there is an up to date range of resources which will be reviewed and updated regularly and kept in a central position. Deficiencies in the school building (cloakroom facilities, broken tiles etc.) should be brought to the attention of the principal/governors.