



# **Pastoral Care Policy**

2023-2026

## **Ethos of the School**

The pastoral dimension is central to the ethos of the school; the atmosphere which the school is creating is ordered yet sympathetic.

It is the aim of Harmony Hill Primary School to provide a disciplined, caring and happy environment where effective learning can take place. In the school it is also our aim that, through this environment, each person associated with the school can feel safe and secure.

## **What this means for Pupils:**

For **pupils** this means encouraging them:

- To set and achieve personal, social, moral, physical and academic goals through a planned and developmental programme.
- To gain maximum benefit from their time in school.
- To develop independence of mind and to take responsibility for their own actions.
- To develop self-discipline and self-respect.
- To develop an understanding of themselves as individuals recognising their strengths and limitations, their personal qualities, their attitudes, and values.
- To develop a respect for the opinions and rights of others and show tolerance towards them.
- To develop an understanding of the world in which we live.
- To foster relationships where they feel happy and secure.

## **What this means for Teachers and other Adults in the School:**

For **teachers** this means:

- Promoting a caring environment where pupils' learning is developed within the context of their individual needs and abilities.
- Developing whole school policies which establish vision, principles, practice and development throughout the school.
- Providing opportunities, and engagement in, professional development.
- Establishing appropriate structures of time and support for those in need.
- Being aware of the children's individual backgrounds and experiences and individual needs and aspirations.
- Fostering relationships where children feel happy and secure and have mutually respectful, supportive relationships with staff.
- Understanding, having an empathy with, and investing in, the pastoral ethos of the school.

**The pastoral dimension has a general and specialised focus.**

## **A - GENERAL FOCUS**

Since the pastoral dimension permeates all activities, the general focus requires a caring commitment by all teachers and adults to every aspect of school life. The implication of this is that the pastoral dimension should, therefore, be evident in:

- the school ethos
- the hidden curriculum
- extra-curricular activities
- individual subjects
- discipline procedures
- reward procedures

### **The School as a Community**

The school as a community should be seen as an extended family where everyone works for the common good.

- Parents will be made welcome in the school and encouraged to feel that their role is important and appreciated e.g.: open days, concerts, sports day etc
- Parents will be encouraged to show their support in a variety of ways: e.g. football/netball matches, fund raising, performances.
- Teachers will share duties as part of a mutually supportive team.

### **The school is also part of a wider community**

The assistance of outside agencies will be sought to extend pupils' experiences: e.g. PSNI, Local Charities

- Links will be established with neighbouring schools.
- There will be links with statutory agencies involved in the health and welfare of children.

## **The School in the Community**

- The school will have close associations with local bodies e.g. the churches, council and other community organisations.
- The school will involve the community through aspects of the hidden curriculum e.g. anti-vandalism, litter and environmental projects.

## **Activities**

Some specific activities which show how the pastoral dimension permeates all aspects of school life are listed below:

- Individual classes and year groups collaborate in projects e.g. those which will provide an awareness of local environmental issues.
- School is used for community activities, where possible, to ensure everyone has a vested interest.
- Schools in an area can collaborate e.g. through competitions, sporting initiatives and within Shared Education where appropriate.
- Children can help support a variety of charities having recognised the challenges of those in need.

## **Attitudes to Learning**

The pastoral dimension influences the attitudes to learning.

- Teachers will provide a range of learning styles in an encouraging framework to promote opportunity for active research and self-expression. The development of a flexible approach is considered to be of paramount importance to effective learning.
- The school will encourage a positive disciplined, caring and happy atmosphere for learning.
- Every child will be treated as an individual.
- Every effort will be made to ensure each child achieves his/her maximum potential, this will include adherence to the Code of Practice for pupils with Special Educational Needs.

## **Caring Attitude**

The pastoral dimension necessitates a caring approach to all activities.

- A positive and fair approach to discipline, in line with the school's Positive Behaviour Policy.
- Appropriate strategies will be adopted where there are particular home circumstances.
- Parents will be encouraged to support the school in the common aim of ensuring the whole development of the pupils.

## **B- SPECIALISED FOCUS**

The class teacher will endeavour to have a detailed knowledge of the needs, aspirations, interests and academic progress of each pupil in the class. With this knowledge, allied to the teacher's skills, the work of the school, parents and other adults is integrated to support the learning and development of each pupil. The following are specific examples.

### **Development of Inter-Personal Relationships**

The development of good inter-personal relationships to ensure mutual respect, positive attitudes, and happiness and security for both pupils and staff.

- Pupils will be encouraged to assist one another, care for one another and develop the skill of listening, thereby promoting tolerance and respect for others.
- Staff will encourage good relationships through the careful management of human relationships.

### **Areas of Experience**

The pastoral dimension means that children are offered a wide variety of experiences.

- The school will continue to have an educational visits' programme, which is progressive and developmental.
- Community fundraising initiatives will be explored.

### **Discipline Procedures**

A positive behavioural programme, to enhance self-esteem, will be adopted where self-discipline is encouraged.

- Central to the school's Positive Behaviour Policy is a programme for positive behaviour.

## **Extra-Curricular Activities**

The school will encourage positive attitudes throughout its extra-curricular programme.

- Positive attitudes will be actively promoted in games activities and those of the arts.
- On day visits, pupils will be encouraged to respect people and property, through adherence to the Code of Conduct.
- Pupils on a residential visit will learn to share in responsibilities undertaken.

## **Personal and Social Development**

The school will encourage the development in pupils of a wide range of personal interests and in the ability to take responsibility.

- The school will continue with its extensive range of after school activities.
- The school will continue with its road safety and cycling proficiency programmes, in line with available funding.
- The school will promote individuals' talents in all areas of the curriculum.
- The school values consistent opportunities and embeds a preventative curriculum, with more bespoke interventions also being planned and implemented as appropriate.

## **Health Education**

Implicit in the pastoral dimension is a programme throughout the school for Health Education and Healthy Eating.

## **Communication**

A policy on Pastoral Care depends on it being communicated positively to staff, pupils, parents and all others involved in the life of the school. To support this pastoral dimension, Mrs H. Johnston, the Principal, has overall responsibility for pastoral care alongside the Vice-Principal, The Designated & Deputy Designated Teachers.

## **Training**

Opportunities will be provided for the above members of staff to undergo training appropriate to Harmony Hill Primary School. In addition, all staff will be trained on a regular basis in the areas of Pastoral Care and Safeguarding Children.

## **Evaluation**

The school will carry out, at regular intervals, an evaluation of the pastoral dimension to determine ways of improving the quality of provision for the benefit of all pupils and teachers. This will, periodically, assess what is being achieved and will be carried out through School Council meetings, parental questionnaires and the Whole School Audit by staff.

This policy will be reviewed in 2026.

