

**BALLYMENA ACADEMY**

**POLICY STATEMENT**

**IN RELATION TO**

**PASTORAL CARE**

**Reviewed :**

**November 2024**

**Ratified at Board of**

**Governors’ Meeting**

**November, 2024.**

Ballymena Academy strives to ‘care for the individual and promote learning and achievement’.

The school’s overarching values are:

A close-up of words

Description automatically generated

Pastoral Care lies at the heart of the school’s overall policy, which seeks to provide a caring and happy environment in which individuals can realise their full potential.

Through its pastoral care arrangements and provision, the school aims to demonstrate its concern for the personal and social development of all pupils, regardless of their age or ability, as individuals and as secure, successful and fully participating members of the school and its wider community.

Pastoral care permeates every aspect of school life and finds expression in the structures, organisational policies and decision-making procedures of the school. Since it is all-pervasive, the pastoral care policy encompasses the aims, objectives, principles, practices and procedures of the following policies, which cumulatively define the pastoral ethos of Ballymena Academy:-

* Able, Gifted & Talented
* Admissions
* Addressing Bullying
* Assessment, Recording and Reporting
* Careers Education, Information and Guidance
* Critical Incident
* Drugs Education and Prevention
* Educational Visits
* Food in Schools
* Health Education
* Emotional Health and Wellbeing
* Inclusion and Diversity
* I.C.T. and E-Safety
* Mobile Devices
* Positive Behaviour
* Pupil Attendance
* Pupil Health
* Pupil Induction
* Relationships and Sexuality
* Safeguarding
* Special Educational Needs

**Aims**

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| The pastoral care system works to ensure:  **Child centred provision** |
| * by promoting a supportive and caring environment in which all pupils are valued, respected, safe and well known to members of staff, and have their progress regularly encouraged. |
| * by contributing to an orderly atmosphere and the promotion and maintenance of positive behaviour. |
| * by offering sympathetic and effective guidance and counselling when required. |
| * by contributing towards strengthening the links between parents, school and community. |
| * by meeting the needs and aspiration of each of the pupils |
| * by promotion of equality of opportunity, high quality learning, a concern for individual pupils and a respect for diversity. |
| * by seeking to meet the additional education and other needs of pupils in order to help them overcome barriers to learning. |
| * by supporting pupil participation and involvement in decisions about school life. |
| * by following safeguarding and child protection guidelines. |
| * by supporting children in making healthy life choices through the provision of a positive learning environment. |
| * by encouraging pupils to: * develop a sense of self-worth; * develop self-discipline and resilience ; * take responsibility for their actions; * accept the consequences of their actions; * respect the rights and feelings of others; * be responsible for their own academic, personal and social development; * develop the basic skills, experiences, knowledge and attitudes that are required for employment and leisure in our ever-changing society. |
| **High quality teaching and learning** |
| * by providing a broad and relevant curriculum~~.~~ |
| * by promoting positive relationships between teachers and their pupils and with other school-based staff. |
| * by teachers using a range of teaching strategies that respond to diversity within the classroom. |
| * by teachers reflecting on their own work and the outcomes of individual pupils. |

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| **Effective leadership** |
| * by Governors understanding their responsibility for the pastoral care of pupils. |
| * By supporting the professional development of staff and sharing and learning from best practice. |
| * by providing the resources needed to support pastoral care. |
| * by monitoring and evaluating our pastoral care practices. |

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| **A school connected to its local community** |
| * by fostering good relationships and communication between the school and its parents and the wider community, crucial to our pupils’ health and wellbeing, learning and achievement. |
| * by having good links, relationships and communication between the school and relevant statutory and voluntary agencies that support pupils’ health and wellbeing, learning and achievement. |
| * by involvement in programmes that support the local and wider community.   **These aims will be encouraged through**:   * The organisation of the school pastoral system where designated teachers have roles and responsibilities for the welfare of the pupils. * Effective relationships among staff, pupils and parents. * A taught programme of Personal Development - as part of Learning for Life and Work, including Health Education/Careers/Anti-Bullying/Drug and Alcohol Abuse/Relationships and Sexuality Education. * Access to Careers Education, Information and Guidance. * Year 8 Induction Programme * The Peer Mentor Scheme. * Clear Child Protection procedures and regular Staff Training. * Access to the School Nurse. * Access to a School counsellor. * Access to an Occupational Therapist. * Student Councils, which provide an opportunity for pupils to raise and discuss issues which can be forwarded to SLT. * A Care Team, consisting of the Vice-Principal (Pastoral), SENCO, EWO, Educational Psychologist and Behaviour Support Co-ordinator, which meets at least once a term. * Liaison with appropriate external services. * Rewarding good behaviour and endeavour and recognising pupil achievement. * An extensive co-curricular programme * A well-developed Primary School Liaison programme * Practical information, including websites and contact numbers of relevant external agencies, is posted on two dedicated noticeboards (Advice Stops). |

**In relation to Pastoral Care, the school broadly defines the following roles and responsibilities:-**

**Teaching Staff**

Teaching staff play a pivotal role in pastoral care. All members of staff should be fully committed to creating an environment of care and trust and to ensuring the emotional and physical welfare of the pupils, as well as their academic progress. In doing so they should adhere to school policy.

Regular contact with pupils enables them to observe the well-being or otherwise of the children in their care. They are the eyes and ears of the rest of the pastoral care team and are alert to changes in pupils’ performance, behaviour, or appearance which may require action or intervention. They work with other staff, as necessary, for the benefit of pupils, briefing the Tutor, Pastoral Adviser and Head of Year as information comes to hand.

**Class Tutors**

The tutor system enables at least one teacher to have a detailed knowledge of the needs, aspirations, interests and academic progress of each pupil. The role of the class tutor is to establish a rapport and secure good relationships with pupils, and to show an interest in the progress of each individual giving help and support when needed. This is facilitated by regular interaction and by working with other staff, as necessary, for the benefit of the pupils, briefing the Pastoral Adviser and/or Head of Year as information comes to hand.

**Pastoral Advisers**

Pastoral Advisers liaise closely with Tutors and class teachers and are available to provide pastoral support to pupils when needed. They work closely with the Head of Year and meet regularly with the Vice-Principal in charge of Pastoral Care.

**Heads of Year**

Heads of Year are in overall charge of pastoral matters relating to their particular year group. Their role is to monitor the welfare, discipline and progress of their pupils, and to foster optimum development in these areas through the provision of constructive support and, where necessary, the imposition of appropriate sanctions. To this end they lead a team of Tutors who are in daily contact with their pupils, and they liaise closely with the Pastoral Advisers and the Vice-Principal in charge of Pastoral Care. They also meet as a Committee to oversee the whole-school provision of pastoral care. Aspects of their role include the organisation of Tutor Group meetings, the taking of Form Assemblies, liaison with parents and the underwriting of school reports.

(Responsibilities of Class Tutors, Pastoral Advisers and Heads of Year are detailed in the Staff Handbook.)

**Vice-Principal in charge of Pastoral Care**

The role of the Vice-Principal in charge of Pastoral Care is to liaise regularly with Heads of Year and Pastoral Advisers, and with outside agencies when appropriate.

It also involves chairing the regular meetings of the HOY Committee and making recommendations to S.L.T. on matters associated with pupil welfare and fostering positive behaviour.

**Principal**

The Principal meets regularly with the Vice-Principal in charge of pastoral care to monitor the pastoral care provision, to provide support and to determine action to be taken.

The Principal also meets with Heads of Year, parents and/or pupils as appropriate.

He also reports to the Board of Governors on matters concerning pastoral care.

**Board of Governors**

The Board of Governors seeks to ensure that the aims of the Pastoral Care policy are fulfilled and to provide appropriate training and resources to facilitate the implementation of the policy.

**Review**

The Pastoral Care Policy and procedures are reviewed and updated in line with the School’s Policy Review Schedule.