



St. Helen's College

Pastoral Care Policy

This is a whole-school policy which includes the Early Years Foundation Stage

1 Introduction

- 1.1 Pastoral Care is the benevolent support provided by school staff 'in loco parentis' which underpins children's social and emotional development, supports them through difficulties and keeps them on track to ensure that they are able to make the most of the opportunities provided, maximise their potential and experience success and a sense of well-being.
- 1.2 High quality pastoral care is essential if the aims of the school are to be realised. It strongly influences the warm, friendly, family atmosphere which pervades the school.
- 1.3 Pastoral care underpins the government's Every Child Matters agenda, which aims for all children to be healthy, stay safe, enjoy and achieve, make a positive contribution and achieve economic well-being.
- 1.4 It is important to remember that every member of staff has the potential and duty to provide pastoral care. The main responsibilities fall to the Head and form teachers but all are involved in different ways.

2 Opportunities for Pastoral Care

- 2.1 Pastoral care cannot and must not be compartmentalised into a timetable slot or delegated to any individual. It must pervade all areas of school life and all pupil experiences and is a shared responsibility of the entire staff.
- 2.2 Pastoral care can be delivered in simple ways such as by smiling at and greeting children, setting a good example, dealing promptly and fully with behavioural or other issues, establishing trust and so on.
- 2.3 However certain activities or times of the day provide particular opportunities for pastoral care. Examples include registration, lunch, form period, weekly tutorials with individuals, sessions of PSHE (P4C and Circle Time, Positive Psychology, Peer Support, Mindfulness), assembly, CAN sessions, Time to Talk and residential trips. All staff should take every opportunity to use these times, and to take advantage of other opportunities, to provide pastoral care.

3 Responsibilities for Pastoral care

- 3.1 The **Head Teacher** has overall responsibility for pastoral care in the school. In consultation with colleagues, she provides policies and structures, defines responsibilities and monitors the effectiveness of pastoral care throughout the school. She 'champions' pastoral care and provides frequent opportunities for staff discussion on pastoral issues. She provides continuity of care as children move through the school.
- 3.2 Pastoral committee – The **Deputy Head**, who is the Upper School Safeguarding lead oversees pastoral care in the U/S, monitors the class 'pupil care files and intervenes where necessary. The **Head of Lower School**, who is the Lower School Safeguarding lead oversees pastoral care in the Lower School. The Head, Head of Lower School and the Deputy meet on a weekly basis to review pupils and incidents across the school. If there are concerns about staff welfare these are discussed at this meeting. Minutes are recorded and reviewed regularly. The Head of Lower School and Deputy Head present a termly pastoral report to the SLT and Principals.
- 3.3 **Form teachers (and Key Persons in Early Years Foundation Stage)** have particular responsibility for the pastoral care of the children in their forms. They play an important part in the social and emotional development of their pupils. In particular they:
- develop a warm rapport, based on mutual respect, with their pupils;
 - get to know their pupils well, including their interests and home backgrounds, and show an interest in them;
 - monitor the confidence, well-being and self-esteem of the pupils, and intervene if problems arise;
 - are approachable, quick to listen and slow to judge;
 - teach by example, and remember always that actions speak louder than words;
 - establish channels of communication with parents, make themselves available for consultations if parents have questions or concerns, and seek the support of parents if problems arise;
 - engender a class dynamic which is inclusive, generous, caring and mutually respectful;
 - encourage responsible behaviour towards others, the classroom and the school environment;
 - provide care 'round the edges' when children experience difficulties with organisation etc.;
 - 'go the extra mile' to support children who are experiencing particular difficulties;
 - are persistent and consistent in requiring the highest standards of speech, dress and behaviour, and deal promptly, fairly and firmly with any transgressions;
 - have a meeting at least once per year with individual children during assembly time to discuss particular needs. (In the EYFS the children choose a worried/happy/sad face to match how they feel each morning, and the staff know which children need priority);
 - record any relevant information about a pupil in the online Pupil Care file and
 - where information is deemed too sensitive they will discuss it directly with the Deputy Head
- 3.4 Although they do not have the form teacher's principal responsibility for pastoral care, all **other teachers and TALAs** support pupils' pastoral care through the actions and attitudes listed above. A TALA with skills as an Independent Listener in the U/S, provides an additional, special resource for children who are distressed; children can self-refer via the 'Time to Talk box' or can be referred by their form teachers.

The Independent Listener shares the notes of these meetings - known as 'Time to Talk' with the Head and Deputy Head and records relevant details in the Pupil Care file. Anything deemed too sensitive is shared directly with the Deputy Head. In the Lower school pupils are not as able to self refer for Time to Talk so form teachers and assistants should be ready to refer if necessary.

- 3.5 **Welfare and office staff** have a particular responsibility; when children are ill, injured, upset or confused they need the greatest sympathy and support. Problems often come to light first through the welfare department, and it is crucially important that all relevant information is passed on to form teachers (and other staff as necessary) promptly and fully.
- 3.6 An important part of the work of the **lunch assistants and Funtasia staff** is to provide pastoral care in the playground and in the case of Funtasia, after school. The playground dynamic is very different from that of the classroom, and staff will often witness behaviour and pick up on issues which might not be evident in class. Much of this will relate to friendships and friendship difficulties, but other issues may arise. It is vital that lunch assistants and Funtasia staff liaise closely with form teachers to ensure continuity and thoroughness of care. There is a link diary on both sites where Funtasia staff can record instances of bad behaviour. These are monitored regularly and support/back up given to Funtasia staff as required. Funtasia staff can also seek advice or help from teachers on site if necessary. Lunch assistants will report any concerns or incidents to the class teacher in the first instance.
- 3.7 **Maintenance staff** provide pastoral care vicariously by maintaining the buildings and grounds in good condition, thus underlining the importance placed on the children's physical environment, and also by their friendly and helpful demeanour.
- 3.8 **Children** are trained in Years 4 and 6 in the Playground Pals/Peer Support programme. Year 2 children act as Guardian Angels for the incoming Year 1 children. All children should uphold and demonstrate in daily school life 'Care for Each other', one aspect of the children's school motto.
- 3.9 Most importantly, any staff member staff must fast-track any pastoral issues with potential Safeguarding concerns by speaking to TMS/LCH at the earliest opportunity.

4 Communication

- 4.1 Pastoral care will be compromised if relevant information about children is not known by staff concerned. Sensitive information should be managed on a need-to-know basis, but in general information about pupils' needs should be shared among all who care for them. Relevant information might include special needs, medical, family, behavioural, social and emotional matters.
- 4.2 Links between teachers and welfare staff, and teachers and lunch assistants, in particular, must be effective, but all staff must take responsibility for briefing form teachers on matters which affect children in their classes. It is then the responsibility of the form teacher to disseminate this information to other colleagues as necessary.
- 4.3 All information about pupils is confidential and must not under any circumstances be passed on to any person who is not a member of staff, unless permission has been granted by the Head .

5 Differentiation

- 5.1 All pupils have a right to high quality pastoral care; however, some pupils, consistently or from time to time, because of personality/character difficulties or circumstances beyond their control, will need more pastoral care than others.
- 5.2 Examples include children with additional needs (CAN) and related problems of self-esteem, and children who have suffered bereavements or parental separation, or are new to the school, or are homesick on residential trips, or who find it difficult to behave, or have bullied or have been bullied, or have fallen out with their friends, or are suffering from examination stress.
- 5.3 Form teachers and other staff must prioritise the needs of these children, and involve other staff (e.g. Heads, LSA's, counsellors) if extra support is necessary.

6 Related Policies

- 6.1 This policy should be read in conjunction with school policies on Safeguarding, Behaviour and Discipline, Welfare, Anti-bullying and Special Educational Needs.

Person responsible	TMS
Date	September 2018
Review Frequency	2 years
Next review	September 2020