Cookstown High School

Pastoral Care Policy

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Rationale

Pastoral Care in Cookstown High School is a priority. It is acknowledged as playing a crucial role in the development of the ethos of the school. This ethos is based on Christian values with emphasis on the intellectual, moral, emotional and spiritual development of each pupil.

The Pastoral Care policy supports the school in promoting a caring, supportive environment in which staff and pupils can work in an atmosphere of mutual respect where the pupils feel secure and are free from emotional and physical harm. Their opinions are valued and their concerns dealt with sympathetically and appropriately.

In Cookstown High School we recognise that central to the success of this, is the involvement of parents and other outside agencies within the community. We strive to work in partnership with them to achieve our aims.

Aims

- To ensure that each pupil feels valued, special and unique, and a member of the school community;
- To instil a sense of personal worth and dignity through intellectual, moral and spiritual development;
- To empower pupils in building and monitoring good relationships with friends, teachers and others;
- To assist individuals to develop their lifestyles, appreciate life and respect the world in which they live;
- To encourage a sense of personal accountability for their own learning and actions.
Organisational structure

To ensure a structured approach to the caring for all pupils, we have developed the following structure.

Form Tutor

Year Head

Vice Principal (Pastoral Care)

Principal

Whilst the Form Tutor is identified as the key person in impacting on the care of the pupils in his/her class, it is important that they work in co-operation with the Year Head who will provide support and leadership in the pastoral domain. In the event of additional support being required, the Vice Principal (Pastoral Care) and Principal are available to support individuals.

Supporting policies

Whilst all policies and procedures within the school take account of the pastoral care of pupils and staff, some support it in very specific areas. Cross referencing the following policies is essential in delivering the Pastoral Care Policy.

These policies include:

• Health and Safety Policy;
• Anti-Bullying Policy;
• Positive Behaviour Policy;
• Misuse of Substances Policy;
• Child Protection Policy;
• Acceptable use of the Internet Policy;
• Use of reasonable force.

Inclusivity

Cookstown High School supports the fundamental principle that every pupil is entitled to be educated. We ensure therefore that pupils’ individual needs are identified and supported so that they continue to feel part of the school community.
Liaison with parents

We see ourselves as partners with parents in the education of pupils. Mutual support and co-operation is an essential element in achieving our objectives. On-going activities to ensure communication and parental involvement include:

- Regular Parent/Teacher meetings;
- Prospectus, News Sheets, Letters;
- Reports;
- Information on the school website;
- Sporting events;
- Extra-curricular activities;
- Drama Productions;
- Parent/Year Head meetings when necessary concerning an individual pupil’s welfare.

Staff development and training

Pastoral Care remains a permanent feature of our School Development Plan and subsequently staff development and training are considered essential to support this. Our on-going development programme helps teachers identify the attitudes, values, skills and knowledge which will enable them to carry out their pastoral roles.

Training programmes are organised through:

- On-site courses;
- Courses organised by SELB.

Resourcing

To enable the implementation of the policy, the Principal will ensure that adequate resources and time are made available to develop the programme throughout the school.

Liaison with External Agencies

Cookstown High School is committed to developing good working relationships with relevant external support agencies to enhance, protect and support the social and emotional welfare of pupils and staff.

Development needs of pupils

Cognisance is taken of the needs of pupils as they develop and change during their time at school.
Taught curriculum

A taught Personal Development Programme is delivered to all classes. It aims to provide young people with the knowledge, values/attitudes and skills required to make good choices in their lives. Active learning strategies are employed to enhance the delivery of the programme.

The programme follows the guidance on the content of Personal Development at Key Stages 3 and 4 provided by the Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment.

Monitoring and evaluation

Monitoring:

On-going monitoring is an integral part of our policy. Checklists are drawn up and procedures are discussed at regular meetings to ensure that the policy is implemented as planned. Support is given to those teachers who require assistance in carrying out any aspect of their pastoral role.

Evaluation:

Evaluation procedures are in place to determine ways of improving the quality of provision in the school for the benefit of all pupils and teachers. All aspects of the policy are evaluated on an on-going basis with pupils and staff views being requested through questionnaires, informal interviews and year groups. Whilst the Vice Principal (Pastoral Care) has overall responsibility for evaluation, self-evaluation is a feature of every teacher’s role. This feedback forms the basis of our staff development programme for the year.