



PASTORAL CARE POLICY

Rationale

Pastoral care provision in the school does not exist in isolation. It is present in all aspects of school life and influences each pupil in every activity associated with the school.

The aims of pastoral care are as follows:

- To create in pupils a sense of belonging and of loyalty to the school.
- To develop positive attitudes to academic performance and develop effective methods of study for the individual pupil.
- To develop pupils' social competence in interaction with each other and adults.
- To prepare pupils for major changes and tasks, e.g. induction in Years 8 and 13, subject choice in Year 10, GCSE, 'AS' Level and 'A' Level examinations.
- To explore with pupils areas of personal development appropriate to their particular age group.
- To prepare pupils for adult working life.
- To ensure that each pupil knows and is known by a particular teacher.
- To seek the co-operation of parents and other agencies where appropriate.

Contributions to Pastoral Care are made by:

- (1) Subject Departments
- (2) The Form System
- (3) The School Counsellors
- (4) The House System
- (5) Learning for Life and Work
- (6) Careers and Guidance
- (7) The School Council
- (8) Peer Mentoring
- (9) The Prefect System
- (10) The Extra-Curricular Activities Programme

(1) Subject Departments

Through effective and thoughtful teaching, pupils are encouraged to realise their academic, aesthetic and physical potential. Members of staff encourage the development of oral and written communication skills. Pupils have opportunities to work together on their own and to take responsibility for their own studies. They are encouraged to develop a knowledge and understanding of themselves and of others and to establish good habits which will serve them well when they leave school.

(2) The Form System

Each Form is looked after by a Head of Year, an assistant Head of Year and for Years 8-12, a Class Tutor for each class set. The Head of Year and Assistant Head of Year 8 oversee the introduction of the new intake each year, liaising closely with the feeder primary schools. Other Heads of Year and Assistants take Forms through from Years 9 to Upper Sixth.

The major task of the team of teachers working with a particular Form is to oversee the progress, both academic and social, of the pupils in their charge. They deal with a wide range of responsibilities including:

- (i) Review of academic progress.
- (ii) Dealing with problems inside and outside the classroom.
- (iii) Update of pupil records.
- (iv) Behavioural issues when they arise.
- (v) Maintaining standards of behaviour and uniform.
- (vi) Organising Class and Form assemblies.
- (vii) Routine administrative matters.
- (viii) Issue of absence notes.
- (ix) Pupil attendance.

Parents' meetings at which there is an opportunity for discussion with individual teachers are arranged on an annual basis for all pupils. Information evenings are also held for parents of pupils in Years 8, 11, 13 and 14.

(3) The School Counsellors

The school has the services of 2 counsellors who visit on 2 different days of the week. Any student is free to make an appointment to speak with them in confidence. The Form Staff, or indeed any member of staff, may suggest that a student avails of this service. It is possible for a student to attend weekly appointments for as long as they and the counsellor deem necessary.

(4) The House System

Each pupil belongs to a House. There are three girls' and three boys' Houses, each containing pupils from Years 8 – 14.

Girls		Boys
Gracey	<i>Green</i>	Conway
Hanna	<i>Red</i>	Barbour
Seymour	<i>Yellow</i>	Hamilton

The aims of the House System are:

- To provide a structure which promotes the participation of pupils in competitive and non-competitive situations.
- To provide an opportunity for older pupils to be able to organise and encourage more junior pupils and accept a degree of meaningful responsibility. This should also provide opportunities for pupils to show initiative.
- To enable the House Staff through the various House activities to form friendly informal relationships with pupils in a non-authoritarian atmosphere.
- To encourage and provide opportunities for pupils to make friends and acquaintances outside their normal Form group.
- To encourage a sense of belonging, loyalty and friendly rivalry which would benefit the general attitude of all pupils towards the school.

Pupils are encouraged to:

- Participate in the inter-House competitions.
- Participate in the non-competitive events run by the Houses, such as collecting for various charities.
- Act as Form representatives.
- Participate in the organisation of the weekly House Assembly.
- Act as House Prefects in Sixth Form and to be involved in all aspects of the organisation of House events, working closely with the Head of House.

(5) Learning for Life and Work

Learning for life and work supports the pastoral provision of the school as it makes all students aware of the knowledge, skills and qualities needed in preparation for future lives and work. This is realised through dedicated lessons.

(6) Careers And Guidance

The Careers Department plays its part in pastoral care by offering advice at all relevant times in the life of a pupil. Information sheets, careers visits, an annual careers convention and personal interviews all help to ensure that correct decisions about subject choice and career are taken. Additionally, in Sixth Form, there are opportunities for work experience, practice interviews and guidance in completing application forms for employment or further and higher education. They also provide a counselling service for all pupils if and when the need arises.

(7) The School Council

Pupils from all Year Groups elect representatives to sit on both a Year Council and an Executive Council. This is designed to give pupils a voice, in a constructive and organised way, to a variety of matters of relevance to them.

(8) Peer Mentoring

Each year a number of Sixth Form students take the opportunity to participate in peer mentoring training. As a result they are able, under the guidance of the Form staff, to assist younger pupils, particularly those from Years 8 with organisational problems they may be facing. Often it is possible to pair up a junior pupil with an older pupil who has previously experienced similar difficulties.

(9) The Prefect System

Pupils become school prefects at the start of Year 14. Under the direction of the Head Boy, Head Girl and their Deputies, they are involved in the organisation of the school and all the functions which take place. There are opportunities to work closely with members of staff, to work in co-operation with one another, to deal effectively with members of the public, and to show leadership in carrying out the allotted tasks. They also have the opportunity to work with the Class Tutors and they are expected to set high standards of behaviour and show responsibility in all aspects of school life.

(10) The Extra-Curricular Activities Programme

Members of staff offer a wide range of extra-curricular activities for all pupils. These provide opportunities for pupils to get to know each other, to learn to work together, to improve their social skills, to learn and develop new skills and to exercise group skills and leadership as the occasion demands. Participation in these also gives pupils a sense of belonging and a sense of loyalty to the school.

The Pastoral Care Policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- Behaviour Management
- Mobile Devices
- Exclusions
- Management of Substance Abuse
- Child Protection
- Anti-Bullying
- School Uniform