

PASTORAL CARE POLICY OF CNOC MHUIRE

1. Core Values

Cnoc Mhuire provides an environment of excellence and care for each member of its school community. We demonstrate our valuing of each person through respect, truth, compassion and challenge. We foster excellence through the highest standards in our teaching, learning and pastoral structures and programmes. Each contributes to and benefits from our community of excellence and care.

2. Pastoral approach in our school

Cnoc Mhuire realises its core aims and goals through a variety of means including our pastoral care approach. We understand Pastoral Care as “*an approach to education which endeavours to value and develop each member of the school community. It promotes learning at every level of the student.*” (The Year Head, Monaghan 1998 IAPCE). Each student has access to the relevant pastoral structures and procedures. Students are also invited to play their part in contributing to the pastoral ethos of this school community. We seek to nurture **positive relationships** as the core resource in developing a pastoral approach. This policy endeavours to put in place the framework necessary to underpin and support this approach. The policy will address the following areas:

- ❖ Pastoral role: definitions and responsibilities
- ❖ Pastoral programmes
- ❖ Pastoral procedures
- ❖ Linking with guidance counselling, learning support, parents, outside agencies
- ❖ Linking with Social, Personal and Health Education
- ❖ Resources and professional development
- ❖ Implementation plan
- ❖ Monitoring and evaluation

3. Pastoral roles: definitions and responsibilities

At the centre of our pastoral framework are the pastoral roles of **Class Teacher, Year Head, Deputy Principal, Guidance Counsellor**. We recognise that each contributes to the pastoral nature of the school community and that other key roles in the school carry significant pastoral dimensions and responsibilities such as the Principal, Class Teacher, Learning Support, Resource Teachers, Special Needs Assistants, coaches etc. In this section we deal with the roles of Class Teacher and Year Head. The following considerations will be taken into account in relation to each role:

Class Teacher

- ❖ Where possible that the Class Teacher teach the class for which they have responsibility
- ❖ A dedicated time of at 10 minutes once per week with the class teacher occurs
- ❖ Class Teachers have a limited role in imposing sanctions – no greater than internal detention
- ❖ The Class Teacher has access to the relevant information on the students in their class
- ❖ The Class Teacher will take roll call, check uniform, jewellery weekly.

- ❖ Inform Year Head of issues re. absence or uniform
- ❖ The Class Teacher will collect absence notes and late notes (put in Year Head cubby-hole)
- ❖ Bring and receive school news on assembly agenda sent via email to all staff
- ❖ Organise wash-up (divide class into 4 teams, each team does **one week** per year)
- ❖ Provisions is made for at least one class outing/event to build strong teacher/class relationships
- ❖ Class Teachers will meet as a group with their Year Head once per term. First years will meet with their mentors once per term.

Year Head

- ❖ Two periods a week are provided by management and given to yearheads for role allocation.
- ❖ A clear role in the Behaviour Code is designated to Yearheads– up to a recommendation for suspension
- ❖ There is clear access to relevant information on the students in the year group
- ❖ A regular meeting usually once a term occurs of the Year Head team with the Principal and Deputy (who is a member of the Pastoral Care team) and Deputy. Relevant information on pastoral care issues can be disseminated.
- ❖ Year Heads meet with their team of Class Teachers usually once a term
- ❖ Year Heads are given opportunities for professional development
- ❖ Overseeing at least one major social justice/fundraising project for the year group
- ❖ Ensure significant participation of the year group in key ethos days of the school such as the Annual school mass, Ash Wednesday mass etc
- ❖ Report to staff in relation to the year group and from time to time meet with subject teachers
- ❖ Liaise with parents according to agreed procedures particular in respect of the annual parent-teacher meeting, individual conferences with parents, collaboration with parent groups in the school
- ❖ Have access to appropriate administrative support

The Pastoral Care Co-ordinator and Team

- ❖ The Pastoral Team consists of the **the Guidance Counsellor, one Year Head, one P.E., the Learning Support Teacher, the SPHE Co-ordinator and the Deputy Principal**. Other members may be co-opted at any time
- ❖ The team will meet monthly and as the need arises
- ❖ They will have responsibility for supporting Class Teachers and Year Heads; co-ordinating the pastoral programme; reviewing students with particular difficulties; advising relevant groups within the school community on pastoral issues and contacting parents.
- ❖ They will present an annual report on the pastoral life of the school to the staff and the Board of Management

4. Pastoral Programme

Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) is a core area of school life and its link to pastoral care is clear. This school has a commitment to SPHE and demonstrates this in its provision on the curriculum which adhere to the official Department guidelines. On-going professional development for staff is prioritised in this area. In addition to this, cnoc Mhuire has its own pastoral programme that is facilitated by the Pastoral Team in conjunction with the Class Teachers and Year Heads. It is the responsibility of the Pastoral Team and the SPHE Co-ordinator to review the inter-relationship and provide for the optimum experience for the student. This school's pastoral programme deals with such areas as: induction to the school and its ethos; class and year group spirit; study skills and approaches; justice and voluntary projects; school procedures. In addition, Anti-bullying audits will be conducted during Friendship week and as the need arises. All students are encouraged to participate in extra-curricular activities and all aspects of school life.

5. Pastoral procedures

This school has a number of procedures with pastoral implications. The Guidance Counsellor will post a weekly timetable of available slots on her door and students can sign or initial an appointment slot. In the area of information we are committed to respectfully and sensitively dealing with how information is received, shared, stored and accessed. Internal emails will have "sensitive information" in the subject line. In some cases, only relevant staff will be informed of issues. Updates will be emailed to staff on a regular basis. Information will be limited and confidentiality will be respected at all times. Deputy Principal and Guidance Counsellor will record minutes of meetings and keep these in a filing cabinet.

Our policy commitment in relation to parents is to constantly work with parents, in partnership, to achieve the optimum quality of relationship. This will require: respect, listening, patience, willingness to reach consensus, creativity, cooperation, generosity. The school community also recognises the need for home school liaison hours.

The school's Crisis Response Policy addresses critical incidences such as sudden death or suicide etc, The Crisis Response Team will be comprised of the pastoral care team, RE teachers and yearheads. The effectiveness of this team will be reviewed once a year and be part of the annual Pastoral Review made to the Board of Management.

The school is committed to providing the necessary resources to underpin this pastoral policy.

6. Implementation of Policy

The implementation of this policy will be rolling in nature and will need to be reviewed from time to time. Implementation plan for a number of key areas:

- ❖ Professional Development will be ongoing for those in key pastoral

roles. S.P.H.E. Megan & Philomena. Yearheads will receive training. Relevant inservices will be supported and attended by the relevant team member..

- ❖ Meetings of Class Teachers and their Year Head will occur at the beginning of each school year.
- ❖ The Year Heads will meet once a month/term at a timetabled meeting.
- ❖ The Pastoral Care Team will present an annual report to the staff and Board of Management in May each year.
- ❖ The Pastoral Care Co-ordinator will meet with the Parents Council at least once a year to take part in a discussion on pastoral care. The date will be set before mid term in the first term.
- ❖ Incoming First Year parents will be informed of the policy on the Information Night and on the First Year Parent's evening after enrolment.
- ❖ The Students Council will meet once per term with Pastoral Care co-ordinator.

7. **Policy Monitoring and Evaluation**

Effective policy requires constant monitoring and evaluation to ensure successful implementation and to review what adjustments may be necessary from time to time. This review will take place at the annual end of year meeting. The review will have the following elements:

- ❖ The Pastoral Care Team are charged with leading the evaluation of the Pastoral Care Policy
- ❖ Reviewing the monitoring reports that were gathered during the life of the policy
- ❖ Surveying staff, students and parents as to its effectiveness in meeting its stated aims
- ❖ Collating these responses and presenting, following consultations with school management, a report to Board and staff with recommendations for further phases of the Pastoral Care policy.
- ❖ Leading a process to articulate and implement new developments in the pastoral care area with particular reference to the Pastoral Care policy.

Reviewed May 9th 2017.

Recommendations for Sept 2017: Megan will have a preprinted form in staff room so staff members who have concerns can register them formally as opposed to stopping a member of the team in the corridor or staff-room etc
Staff to be emailed after our meetings regarding list of students discussed.
Some pastoral care issues arose on bus transport and the pastoral care team will examine what can be done about this in Sept 2017
To renew efforts to revive the Parent's Council for the coming years.
The Critical Incidence Policy will be reviewed.

