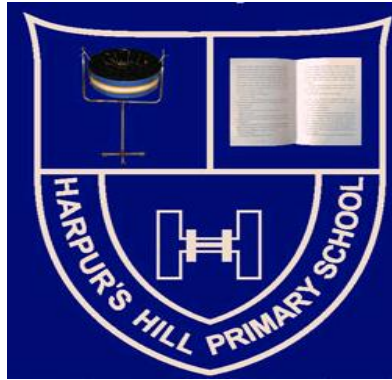


Harpur's Hill Primary School & Cuilrath Corner Nursery



‘Success Through Nurture’

Pastoral Care Policy

Responsible for: Jayne Scott
Agreed: October 2025
Approved by Board of Governors:
Due for Review:

Our Vision Statement

Our vision in Harpur's Hill Primary School & Cuilrath Corner Nursery is for every child to be valued, supported, and inspired to grow in a community where they develop a lifelong love for learning and achieve 'Success Through Nurture'.

Our Mission Statement

Our mission is to be a safe, nurturing, happy school where every child will be included, valued and encouraged to learn and reach their potential. Every child will achieve success through respect and encouragement.

Ethos

HHPS and CCN is an inclusive and nurturing school that believe every child should have access to the curriculum, regardless of need, ability and background. Children are taught in a secure, caring and positive environment which empowers every child to reach their potential. We are committed to overcoming barriers to learning, developing confidence and fostering resilience. HHPS believe in the power of community partnerships, working hand in hand with families and local organisations to create a rich tapestry of support and opportunity. Together we aspire to build a brighter future for our children where each child can thrive and achieve their dreams.

Rationale

At Harpur's Hill Primary School & Cuilrath Corner Nursery we believe that Pastoral Care is a priority and plays a crucial role in the development of the ethos of the school. We have a responsibility towards the children in our care and we will take all reasonable steps to ensure that their welfare is safeguarded and their safety is preserved.

We will endeavour to provide a caring and nurturing environment for all of our pupils, where each pupil will be treated as an individual and equipped with the necessary skills to cope with the pressures they may face in a rapidly changing society.

Definition

Pastoral care is a set of systems and programmes in school which attempt to meet the totality of needs of its pupils (social, spiritual, mental, emotional, physical), so that every pupil has the opportunity in a safe environment to develop his or her potential in every area of his/her life and is equipped with the skills to cope with the outside world.

Aim:

We aim to create a warm, caring environment providing for the all-round development of contented, socially at ease and educationally thriving children. It is important that each pupil feels valued and all staff will endeavour to provide a stimulating environment where children can develop socially, emotionally and physically.

* for the purpose of this document 'Harpur's Hill P.S' includes Cuilrath Corner Nursery Unit

Specific Issues

Within the school, fostering warm and positive relationships between pupils and teachers is paramount. Facilitating an atmosphere of care and respect within the formal and informal life of the school community is essential in creating a good ethos. The values which underline successful personal safety can most effectively be fostered through the ethos of the school and positive role models should be provided by all staff.

When creating a positive ethos, it is therefore important:

- That parents are aware of and have confidence in our pastoral care arrangements.
- That each pupil's self-esteem and self-confidence are promoted.
- That positive approaches are used to promote and maintain good standards of discipline nurturing assertiveness and communication skills.
- That we endeavour to foster self-respect, self-discipline, tolerance, equality and fairness as this generates a positive climate within the school community where every individual feels valued and cared for at all times.
- Relationships among the staff are good. They feel valued, work well together, are an effective team and the pupils' interests are their main focus
- The pupils are taught to work with their peers: they grow to value and respect the contributions and views of others.
- The staff are well informed about the potential dangers to children and young people (also see Safeguarding Policy)
- The pupils gain insights into a range of important areas, including aspects of health education and they develop useful personal and social skills to help them cope with existing challenges

In the interests of pupil safety, children will adhere to the timetable set out for break-time and lunch-time, children will either be in the care of a teacher and/or Supervisor at all times. All exterior gates will remain locked, except for ten minutes before and after pupil arrival and departure. Access to the school may be obtained by using the buzzer on the front gate. In line with Safeguarding guidance, no parents will be allowed on school premises without an appointment.

Roles/Responsibilities:

The Board of Governors have overall responsibility for pastoral care in the school and to ensure the school implements its Pastoral Care Policy and reviews it on a regular basis. The Board of Governors, the Principal and the Senior Management team are responsible for keeping everyone aware of pastoral care issues and ensuring that they are implemented and addressed. The Pastoral Care Co-ordinator, Mrs Scott, will also endeavour to ensure that the appropriate resources are available to assist with the implementation of pastoral care issues. Staff will also be updated with all procedures and developments and will disseminate relevant information to other members of staff.

We believe that we have a pastoral responsibility towards the children in our care and we will take all reasonable steps to ensure that their welfare is safeguarded and their safety preserved.

A wide range of pastoral activities occur throughout the school day and we aim to encourage our children to develop a sense of responsibility for their own safety. All staff are responsible for the provision of pastoral care within their own classrooms and in their personal dealings with pupils. During this time they will endeavour to reach objectives –

Individual

- To increase pupils' self-esteem and motivation for learning by developing an awareness of their own talents and abilities
- To respect others by establishing and sustaining positive relationships and to increase their ability to make informed choices in matters of personal health
- To foster a commitment to learning and the ability to demonstrate independence, initiative and perseverance when completing tasks
- To understand their distinctive roles in life and to develop the personal strengths and resources to deal with any difficulties they may face.

Contributing to Society

- to create in pupils an awareness of their own and other cultures, heritage, peoples and race and to develop concern and respect for the welfare of others
- to help pupils appreciate the role and influence of the media within society
- to understand the effects of scientific, technological and environmental change and assess the impact of choices that may have to be made.

Contributing to the Environment and the Economy

- to encourage pupils to be enterprising, adaptable and open to new ideas
- to enable the children to make balanced and informed economic judgements and be discerning and effective consumers
- to begin the process of preparing pupils for the world of work and the enhancement of career opportunities through life-long learning
- to enable pupils to appreciate, value and respect their environment and encourage them to think globally and act locally

Each teacher will endeavour to help pupils make informed decisions about issues in terms of 'right' and 'wrong,' remaining sensitive to the beliefs of others. In this way we will try to:

- build up pupils' self-esteem
- encourage them to be assertive in appropriate situations
- help them to resist peer pressure (but not peer preference)
- train them to avoid the use of sarcasm, humiliation, etc.

Curriculum

A programme of Personal, Social and Health Education is delivered to all classes. It empowers pupils with knowledge, values, attitudes and skills, which will enable them to make appropriate choices in their lives. In delivering the programme active learning strategies are used such as Circle Time, School Council Meetings and PDMU activities.

Nurturing Environment

In Harpur's Hill we strive to incorporate the six nurture group principles in all classrooms. The principles are

1. Children's learning is understood developmentally
2. The classroom offers a safe base
3. Nurture is important for the development of self-esteem
4. Language is understood as a vital means of communication
5. All behaviour is communication
6. Transitions are significant in the lives of children

Our Nurture Room is available to children with Social, Emotional or Behavioural problems. Children are identified through the Boxall Profile in P1 to P3 and we can facilitate up to 10 children from P1 – P4 to support children in a Nurturing environment. The room has a full time Nurture teacher and classroom assistant who have accredited training from the Nurture Group.

Children identified as needing extra support will be invited to attend our Homework Club where they will receive more individual and small group work based around their behaviour, social and academic needs. Trained staff may also be deployed throughout the school day if and when a need arises.

Shared Education

Since November 2015, Harpur's Hill Primary School & Cuilrath Corner Nursery and St. Malachy's Primary School successfully applied to take part in The Shared Education Project. This allowed the schools to surmount barriers to better learning through shared education. The leadership in both schools articulate clearly to staff, parents and children the joint vision for the Shared Education project. This is reflected through the ethos and processes evident in both schools. They endeavour to promote improvement in shared education, empowering and supporting staff whilst keeping parents informed regularly of the emerging outcomes of shared education and using their views to help us to improve further. These opportunities are based on relevant learning objectives for the children and reflect the Play Rational and Principles, that is, the child as an autonomous and creative learner, investigator, problem solver, reflective and social learner.

In 2019, Harpur's Hill P.S. joined with St Malachy's, St Johns and Killowen in a JPD project to further develop skills to develop the education of the children further. The same principles apply as with the other Shared Education Project but only staff presently have contact.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Pastoral care will at times be the focus of general and key stage meetings, thus ensuring that monitoring and evaluation of pastoral care issues will occur. Parents, pupils and staff views are requested through questionnaires or informal interviews. This feedback will be taken into consideration when planning our school development programme. This policy will be reviewed and updated on a regular basis.

School Development Plan and Staff Development

Pastoral Care may feature on the School Development Plan. Staff Development and Training are essential in ensuring that staff are kept up to date with new developments in the field of Pastoral Care. Interpersonal skills, counselling skills and teaching methods are key areas focused on. Courses can be carried out in school, organised by EA or by other bodies. This development programme enables teachers to carry out their pastoral roles more effectively.

Resources

To enable the implementation of the policy, the Principal and Governors will ensure that relevant, up to date resources are available.

Parental Involvement

Parents are encouraged to take an active part in their children's learning with two interviews organised in October and February to inform them of their child's strengths and weaknesses. The school will follow the necessary guidelines and advice for meeting with parents.

A written report is sent home in June with evidence of children's work recorded in their Record of Achievement folders. All parents are encouraged to arrange an appointment with the class teacher if they have any concerns regarding their child.

Questionnaires are sometimes sent to parents to establish their views on relevant issues, parents are welcome to observe lessons to learn about our teaching styles and behaviour strategies. Parental volunteers are used by teachers to support them in delivering the curriculum and they are encouraged to become more involved in various school activities such as assisting in the library, selling books through the Book Fair and making story sacks. Due to legal requirements, parent volunteers will be screened by the EA and the relevant vetting procedures carried out.

Ongoing activities that ensure communal and parental involvement include:

Prospectus, News Sheets, Letters,	PTA
Notice board information, Website, Annual Report	Residential visits
Annual Progress Reports	EMU links
Fund raising activities	Swimming
Extra curricular activities	Local festivals
School concerts/shows	Musical tuition
Sporting events.	Young Enterprise
Visits from ministers, police, nurse etc	Competitions
Extended schools activities	Extra-curricular activities
Afternoon hobbies	School fete

Liaison with External Agencies.

Good working relationships are developed with external support agencies (eg, Social Services, School nurse, Educational Welfare Officer, police, Educational Psychologist, MAST and Educational Support Staff). Pupils' social and emotional welfare is therefore enhanced, protected and supported.

All external agencies will adhere to Covid 19 guidance.

Monitoring and Evaluation

This policy was formulated by Mrs Scott in consultation with school Governors, staff, pupils and parents. It has been approved by the Board of Governors and it is the intention of the stakeholders to review and update it every year.

It is important to remember that staff, pupils and parents all have an active part to play and have a responsibility to ensure an effective implementation and maintenance of this policy.

Links to other policies

Safeguarding	Health and Safety	Anti-Bullying
Positive Behaviour	Drugs	Acceptable Use of the Internet
Use of Reasonable Force	Intimate Care	Period Dignity Policy

Procedure where the School has concerns, or has been given information, about possible abuse by someone other than a member of staff

Member of staff completes the Note of Concern on what has been observed or shared and must ACT PROMPTLY.

Source of concern is notified that the school will follow up appropriately on the issues raised.



Staff member discusses concerns with the Designated Teacher or Deputy Designated Teacher in his/her absence and provides note of concern.



Designated Teacher should consult with the Principal or other relevant staff before deciding upon action to be taken, always taking care to avoid undue delay. If required, advice may be sought from a CPSS officer.



Child Protection referral is required

Designated Teacher seeks consent of the parent/carer and/or the child (if they are competent to give this) unless this would place the child at risk of significant harm then telephones the Children's Services Gateway Team and/or the PSNI if a child is at immediate risk. He/she submits a completed UNOCINI referral form within 24 hours.

Designated Teacher clarifies/discusses concern with child/ parent/carers and decides if a child protection referral is or is not required.



Child Protection referral is not required

School may consider other options including monitoring the situation within an agreed timescale; signposting or referring the child/parent/carers to appropriate support services such as the Children's Services Gateway Team or local Family Support Hub with parental consent, and child/young person's consent (where appropriate).

Where appropriate the source of the concern will be informed as to the action taken. The Designated Teacher will maintain a written record of all decisions and actions taken and ensure that this record is appropriately and securely stored.

Dealing with Allegations of Abuse Against a Member of Staff

Key Points

Lead individual learns of an allegation against a member of staff and informs the Chair/Vice Chair of BoG as appropriate.



Guidance on the Next Steps

Lead individual then establishes the facts, seeks advice from the key agencies as appropriate, usually through informal discussion.



Possible Outcomes

Following on from establishing the facts, seeking advice from Key Agencies and discussion with the Chair and/or BoG to agree a way forward from the options below.



Precautionary suspension is not appropriate and the matter is concluded.

Allegation addressed through relevant disciplinary procedures.

Precautionary suspension under Child Protection procedures imposed

Alternatives to precautionary suspension imposed

How a Parent can make a Complaint

If a parent has a potential child protection concern:

I have a concern about my/a child's safety



I can talk to the class teacher



If I am still concerned, I can talk to the Designated Teacher (Mrs Scott) or Deputy Designated Teacher (Mrs Houmann-Green) for Child Protection or the Principal



If I am still concerned, I can talk/write to the Chair of Board of Governors



If I am still concerned I can contact the NI Public Services Ombudsman
Tel: 0800 343 424



At any time I can talk to the Children's Services Referral Gateway Team [03001234333]
or the PSNI Central Referral Unit at 028 9025 9299

Date Policy Reviewed:	
Signed:	Designated Teacher
Signed:	Principal
Signed:	Chair of Board of Governors