



**Portrush Primary School**  
**Pastoral Care Policy**  
**Last Review: Sept 2021**  
**Reviewed: Sept 2022**

# Portrush PS

## Pastoral Care Policy and Practice

This document is based on Every School a Good School (Department of Education 2009) and sets out our school's policy and practice in relation to the care of pupils and the promotion of an environment where staff realise that the welfare of every child is of paramount consideration and so endeavour to create a caring, happy, secure, supportive and stimulating environment where children can develop socially, emotionally and physically at their own rate.

### School Motto

**"Together we shape our future"**

### School Mission Statement

Portrush Primary School recognises the unique and distinctive character of each individual pupil and aims for young people to achieve their potential. Each pupil will be provided with learning opportunities to develop as an individual, as a contributor to the economy and environment. The school will strive to equip pupils with the necessary knowledge and skills to enable them to make informed and responsible choices and decisions throughout their lives.

### School Ethos Statement

In Portrush Primary School the welfare of every child is of paramount consideration and we endeavour to create a caring, happy, secure, supportive and stimulating environment where children can develop socially, emotionally and physically at their own rate.

### Child Centred Provision

***At Portrush Primary School we aim to meet the needs and aspirations of the pupils within the school*** by keeping the pupils' interests and welfare as the main focus. Outside agencies are liaised with to ensure that pupils feel secure and are free from physical and emotional harm. Classroom activities are planned so that pupils are taught to work with their peers and so that they grow to value and respect the contributions and views of others. Positive approaches to discipline are employed to maintain good standards of behaviour and there is an appropriate balance between rewards and sanctions.

***We promote equality of opportunity, high quality learning, and a concern for individual pupils and a respect for diversity. The school*** adheres to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child Principles and Articles with classroom charters

being formed around these. The admissions information of the school states that Portrush Primary School will accept all pupils regardless of religious or political persuasions or ethnic origin provided that their parents are supportive of the school's aims, rules and management procedures. There is a designated teacher for the Inclusion and Diversity Service and Newcomers are welcomed into the school environment with every opportunity being taken to meet their educational, social and emotional needs. A 'Pupil Voice' operates and plays when appropriate a part in the organisation of the school's charity events.

***We seek to meet the additional education and other needs of pupils and to help them overcome barriers to learning by*** promoting good attendance at all times and by adopting a positive approach to discipline to encourage appropriate behaviour both inside and outside the classroom. Newcomers are welcomed into the school environment and every opportunity is taken to liaise with parents to ensure that children are settled and happy in their new environment. The resources provided by the Inclusion and Diversity Service are used with these children and the designated teacher liaises with this service to ensure that the best care is provided for those children who have English as an additional language. Children with special educational needs have Education Plans prepared for them by class teachers and these are co-ordinated by the school's Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator.

***We believe in and support pupil participation and involvement in decisions about school life. We do this through*** promoting Articles 12 and 13 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Children which are as follows:

*Article 12 (Respect for the views of the child):* When adults are making decisions that affect children, children have the right to say what they think should happen and have their opinions taken into account. This does not mean that children can now tell their parents what to do. This Convention encourages adults to listen to the opinions of children and involve them in decision-making -- not give children authority over adults. Article 12 does not interfere with parents' right and responsibility to express their views on matters affecting their children. Moreover, the Convention recognizes that the level of a child's participation in decisions must be appropriate to the child's level of maturity. Children's ability to form and express their opinions develops with age and most adults will naturally give the views of teenagers' greater weight than those of a pre-schooler, whether in family, legal or administrative decisions.

*Article 13 (Freedom of expression):* Children have the right to get and share information, as long as the information is not damaging to them or others. In exercising the right to freedom of expression, children have the responsibility to also respect the rights, freedoms and reputations of others. The freedom of expression includes the right to share information in any way they choose, including by talking, drawing or writing.

Children are encouraged to offer their thoughts and opinions in Circle Time, class meetings and through the 'Pupil Voice'. To facilitate children's involvement in school life all adults at Portrush Primary School adhere to the Pupil Pastoral Promises (Appendix 3)

**We** realise the big step it is for many children making the transition from primary to secondary school. In order to make this move as smooth as possible the Primary 7 pupils in Portrush Primary School may accept invitations for 'Taster Days' from local secondary schools so that children can get a first-hand experience of what a typical day in a secondary may be like. Information on Open Nights is also provided for Primary 6 and 7 children. There is always full co-operation with each of the secondary schools that children choose and all relevant information is passed to the next school.

**The school follows its Safeguarding Policy and all relevant Department of Education circulars.** Children know about keeping safe and posters are in place around the school highlighting who children can talk to if they have a problem. A worry box is also available for children to express personal concerns that may be bothering them. Internet Safety and anti-bullying are part of teachers' curricular planning and children are made aware of how to keep themselves safe in many different situations. Non-teaching staff are trained in Child Protection on a bi-annual basis and teaching staff are trained annually. The Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy is reviewed annually with parents receiving a paper copy when their child starts school. This policy is updated on the website annually and a paper copy given to all parents bi-annually. Volunteers in school are Access Northern Ireland checked and parent volunteers are never left on their own with children.

**We support children in making healthy choices and through the provision of a healthy environment.** We try to ensure that staff have received appropriate First Aid training and health and safety is a main priority at all times both inside and outside school. Healthy food is encouraged and the staff organise special events to highlight healthy food choices. The school's outdoor facilities are excellent and full use is made of the grounds and outdoor play equipment. Physical Education is timetabled and all aspects of the physical development curriculum are covered in these lessons with good use made of outside agencies and specialists when possible. After school activities also focus on getting children actively involved in a wide range of physical activities.

### **High Quality Teaching and Learning**

**We provide a broad and relevant curriculum as is enhanced by** a Scheme of Work for Personal Development and Mutual Understanding that meets the needs of the pupils. Personal Development and Mutual Understanding is timetabled in each classroom and includes Internet Safety, Drugs Education and Relationships and Sexuality Education where appropriate. Religions Education and Physical Education lessons also play an

important part in promoting pastoral care within the curriculum. Specific programmes relating to health and well-being are also utilised.

***We promote positive relationships between teachers and their pupils and with other school-based staff through*** promoting good relationships in class using class charters which are completed in consultation with the children. Rewards and sanctions are used to promote positive behaviour. Playground supervisors and staff work together to ensure that children play fairly and safely at all times. A Staff Code of Conduct exists to safeguard children at all times.

***Teachers use a range of teaching strategies that respond to diversity within the classroom such as*** Circle Time with collaborative learning promoted through group work and appropriate structures. Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities are highlighted in each classroom and from P4-P7 a main focus is given to one of these each half-term.

***Teachers reflect on their own work and the outcomes of individual pupils through*** the use of staff planning and staff meetings. Monitoring arrangements are in place relating to teaching and learning and these focus on pupil progress and achievements taking into account all factors e.g. Special Educational Needs, English as an Additional Language, home circumstances etc. Classroom observation will take place to assess pupils' personal development and behaviour with class teachers taking into careful consideration pastoral issues where pupil performance is not meeting expectations e.g. falling standardised scores, literacy and numeracy discrepancies or below expectations in progress tracking grids.

### **Effective Leadership**

***Governors understand their responsibility for the pastoral care of pupils. They do this by*** monitoring and evaluating the strategies in place for promoting pastoral care, health, well-being and attendance contained in the School Development Plan, including consulting with the 'Pupil Voice', pupils and parents if and when necessary. They attend Child Protection training as necessary and realise the importance of this role. In addition they monitor the reporting of behaviour, suspension and expulsion when such occasions arise.

***In relation to pastoral care we support the professional development of staff and sharing and learning from best practice by*** planning for training in pastoral matters in school using outside agencies when available or through the sharing of staff expertise on planned development days or in staff meetings. Teachers may also attend additional training for specific programmes and good practice is then shared with colleagues.

***We provide the resources needed to support pastoral care through:***

- effective staff deployment - specialist roles (see Appendix 2);
- classroom resources; and
- play resources and facilities.

***We monitor and evaluate our pastoral care practices in a number of ways through:***

- reviewing the school's performance regularly in preparation of the School Development Plan;
- specific monitoring/evaluative duties of individual staff with responsibilities e.g. the curriculum leader for Personal Development and Mutual Understanding, Pastoral Care Coordinator (Appendix 2 for details);
- using school data for attendance, school meals etc.;
- examples of plenary sessions and pupil feedback to teachers about teaching and learning with links to Assessment for Learning and other areas of school life such as play and after school activities;
- seeking the opinion of the 'Pupil Voice' if deemed to be necessary or appropriate and
- using questionnaires for pupils or parents.

### **A School Connected to its Local Community**

***Good relationships and communication between the school and its parents and the wider community are crucial to our pupils' health and wellbeing, learning and achievement. These are developed by*** parents being made welcome in the school right from the moment they enter the reception area. There are celebrations of work and achievement in weekly assemblies and parents are an integral part of Rise 'n' Shine assemblies with refreshments being provided on these occasions.

Parents feel free to raise concerns regarding any problems that have been raised with teachers and staff endeavour to get back to parents as soon as possible. This may be through a phone call or by organising an individual meeting with the concerned parent. When particular problems arise e.g. with regard to behaviour and attendance parents are spoken to about the school's concerns and staff work alongside parents where possible to meet the needs of individual children. A Complaints Procedure forms part of the Child Protection Policy if parents feel that they need to pursue a formal complaints approach.

Parents are encouraged to volunteer for educational visits, sporting events and after school clubs. Through homework activities, parents may support their child by becoming a learner and partner in their child's education.

The Parent Teacher and Friends' Association plays an important part in the life of the school seeking to provide much needed resources for the school to enhance the education already being provided.

A wide range of school documents is available on the school website to keep parents informed and up to date of all activities and developments. A monthly newsletter is sent to parents outlining past events and the calendar of activities for the next month. This is also available on the website.

Reporting to parents about their child's personal development takes place formally twice a year at parent teacher interviews and informally as and when the need arises. Written reports are provided at in June each year.

There is community input into school life on matters related to health, wellbeing, identity and community issues through visits from outside agencies e.g. School Nurse, Police Service Northern Ireland, Dairy Council, Royal National Lifeboat Institution etc. and through educational visits e.g. the Library.

The school grounds house the Youth Centre and this is a shared facility.

***We have good relationships and communication between the school and the education agencies that support pupils' health and wellbeing, learning and achievement, namely Education Authority services e.g. Autism Advisory Intervention Service, Behaviour Support and Primary Referral Unit, Psychology, Education and Welfare Officer etc.***

***We have good links with other relevant statutory and voluntary agencies that support pupils' health and wellbeing, learning and achievement. These are*** Dental services, School Nurse, Medical staff, Speech Therapy, Physiotherapy etc. Regional Integrated Support Education service for Schools also provides support and we work closely with Social Services and Police Service Northern Ireland/Safeguarding and Child Protection when the need arises.

***The school is involved in specific programmes that meet the needs of the community and nearby schools. These include*** transition events for children moving from pre-school into P1 e.g. Open Night, Play Days, Christmas parties etc. The school also works closely with secondary schools by attending special events and taster days to make the transition from primary to secondary education as smooth as possible.

**The Designated Teacher, Mrs J. McNeill, may be contacted in the event of any queries regarding this policy.**

Appendix 1                      Related Policies

Appendix 2                      Related Pastoral Roles and Responsibilities

Appendix 3                      Pupil Pastoral Promise

## **Appendix 1: Related Policies**

- Safeguarding and Child Protection (including Intimate Care and Use of Restraint)
- Code of Conduct (Staff)
- Admissions Criteria
- Positive Behaviour
- Anti-Bullying
- Personal Development and Mutual Understanding
- Relationships and Sexuality Education
- Drugs Education
- Special Educational Needs
- Administration of Medication in School
- Acceptable Use of the Internet and Digital Technologies
- Social Networking



## Appendix 2: Related Pastoral Roles and Responsibilities

<u>Role/Responsible for</u>	<u>Name</u>
Designated Teacher for Child Protection	Mrs J McNeill
Personal Development and Mutual Understanding Curriculum Leader	
Pastoral Care Co-ordinator	
Pupil Voice Link Teacher	
Deputy Designated Teacher for Child Protection	Mrs L Bradley
Learning Support Co-ordinator	
Inclusion and Diversity Service	
Healthy Eating	Mr J Birch

### **Appendix 3: Pupil Pastoral Promises**

***All the adults at school make these promises – the Governors, teachers and other adults who work in school.***

We will ask what you want and need and try to provide these things.

We will help you with any problems you have with your learning.

We will tell how you are getting on with your work and how to make it better.

We will make sure your parents know how to help you with your work and tell them how you are getting on at school.

We will get other people to help you, if you need special help.

We will have good resources to help you learn, relax and play.

We will be fair to you all and treat you all with respect.

We will involve you in decisions and pay attention to what you say.

We will keep you safe and make school a healthy place.

We will make it enjoyable learning how to be safe, happy and healthy.

We will make sure that adults and pupils try to get on well with each other.