



Pastoral Care Policy

St. Anne's Community College,
Killaloe

September 2022

Principal:

SST Coordinator:

Mission Statement

St. Anne's Community College provides an inclusive post-primary education for students from the local and wider communities by fostering an inclusive atmosphere where students of diverse ability and backgrounds can flourish.

Personal and academic development are central to our holistic approach which encompasses physical, social, emotional and spiritual wellbeing.

We strive towards developing a school leaver who is respected as an individual and educated to reach their full potential.

At St Anne's, we believe in inspiring minds, nurturing spirit and respecting difference.

Ethos

St. Anne's, as a multi-denominational Community College, seeks to facilitate the development of the human, spiritual and academic potential in every student.

The school community cultivates a spirit of justice and compassion for others through fostering a community of respect, integrity, responsibility and concern for others.

The school community learns together in a happy, safe, supportive and healthy environment where education is a partnership between school, home and the local community, with the wellbeing of all at its core.

Rationale

Pastoral Care is a core dimension of life of the school. It is defined as the system of roles, resources, structures, policies, programmes and processes employed to support the development of young adults. Pastoral Care is an integral part of our approach to a holistic education, which puts the educational, emotional, social and spiritual development of the student at the centre of its learning values. This policy sets a formal structure for pastoral care, setting out clear and defined roles and expectations to ensure that every member of our school community has access to relevant pastoral structures and procedures.

Pastoral Goals

1. To provide a safe, caring and supportive environment for students.
2. To care for and support each member of the school community.
Priority is given to the nurturing of teaching and learning relationships

Aims of a Pastoral Care Structure

- To promote a positive school environment and to ensure that student wellbeing is being promoted in all aspects of school life.
- To provide a pivotal role in the leading of teacher and student wellbeing in the school.
- To act as an early warning system for the early detection of vulnerable students and those who are “at risk” or those being bullied.
- To provide the support needed to students.
- To provide the link between Student Support team and Pastoral Care Team.
- To help the young person to make their own decisions through greater self-awareness and independence.
- To recognise talents and abilities.
- To involve all partners in the life of the school.
- To acknowledge and support each person’s role in the school community.
- To nurture teaching and learning relationships.

Pastoral Care Personnel

We take a collaborative approach to Pastoral Care in St. Anne’s Community College and therefore, each staff member has a role to play in its implementation. However, there are a number of personnel who have a specific role to play. These include:

Board of Management

The Principal

Deputy Principal

Tutors

Critical Incident Team

Chaplain

Guidance Counsellors

SPHE Coordinator

SEN Coordinator

Prefects

Subject Teachers
Student Council Liaison Teacher
Peer Mentors
Student Support Team/Care Team

Roles and Responsibilities;

Board of Management

The Board of Management supports the principles of inclusivity and equality of access. The Board will have overall responsibility for the development and monitoring of policy. The Board will ensure in so far as it's practicable and in keeping with the Dept. of Education and Science allocation that adequate resources are allocated for the provision of Pastoral Care.

The Principal and Deputy Principal

The Principal will work with the Board of Management, Staff and students in the development of the policy and ensuring that the proper structures and resources are put in place for its effective operation. The Principal / Deputy Principal will oversee the implementation of the policy, provide from available resources the necessary structures to implement the policy, contact and liaise with parents and with outside agencies as necessary and will remain available to meet students, staff and parents in a supportive environment. In their role as Designated Liaison Person and Deputy Designated Liaison Person, the Principal and Deputy Principal will contact relevant agencies in accordance with Child Protection Procedures.

The Head of Year

Each year group will have one assigned Head of Year which, where possible, will remain with the group during their first three years in school. The Head of Year will have the responsibility for the pastoral, educational and disciplinary care of the year group. They will meet the group on a regular basis and keep them appraised on school policies. The Head of Year will attend all relevant meetings of the Year Group and will have access to information on students in that year. The Head of Year will have a caring interest in each student of that year and will be aware in so far as is possible of the reality of the students' lives. Where necessary, they will intervene to help students who are encountering difficulty with particular areas of school policy and provide necessary supports for the students. This may involve liaising with parents/guardians and other members of the Care Team.

Tutor

The tutor, through meeting students on a regular basis, will identify any challenging areas for the students in their group and liaise with Heads of Year,

management and other members of the care team, as necessary. The tutor will support the work of the Heads of Year and teachers in supervising, overseeing and monitoring student journal and attendance and will encourage group activities e.g. sport etc. Where possible, the tutor will also be timetabled to teach to their group, thus enhancing the relationship between the tutor and student and promoting openness and trust.

Critical Incident Team

St. Anne's Community College has developed a Critical Incident Management Plan to cope more effectively in the aftermath of an incident. This enables the school community to reach quickly and effectively and to maintain a sense of control. The school is proactive in creating a coping, supportive and caring ethos in the school.

'A critical incident is any incident or sequence of events which overwhelms the normal coping mechanisms of the school and disrupts the running of the school.'

Guidance Counsellor

The Guidance Counsellor provides for the needs of the students under 3 integrated areas: personal/social guidance and counselling, educational and career guidance. The Guidance Counsellor is available to meet students in class groups and for individual consultation with students and/or parents on matters related to career advice and possible personal difficulties. He/She liaises with the Principal, Deputy Principal and other staff members and members of the Pastoral Care team as necessary, in providing this support and guidance. A member of the Guidance Counsellor team is represented at 3 Student Support team meetings weekly with Head of Year and Chaplaincy to identify and support student needs. All Guidance Counsellors and Chaplaincy attend a Pastoral Care team meeting once a week.

Chaplain

The Chaplain responds to the spiritual and pastoral needs of the school community under his/her care – students, their families and school staff, in the spirit of the ethos of its trustees. In particular, the school Chaplain strives to be present to those who find themselves at threshold times in their lives. Building supportive relationships is at the core of the Chaplains pastoral responsibilities, celebrating times of joy and offering support at times of struggle or sadness.

The Chaplain is available to individual students, groups and their parents / guardians to empower them to access the resourcefulness within themselves and their lives so as to enable them to cope with whatever may arise that interferes with learning and their journey to reaching their full potential.

He/She is available to all staff in a supportive way both professionally and personally. On an on-going basis, the Chaplain reaches out to the students and staff in a ways that ensure they feel valued and respected, building confidence and resilience.

The role of the Chaplain within the school is one which is a supportive faith presence within the school community. The Chaplain also attends Pastoral Care team weekly meeting at the school with the school's Guidance Counsellors. The Chaplain attends 3 Student Support team meetings weekly with the Head of year and Guidance Counsellors. The Chaplain is the Student Support team co-ordinator and attends meetings at LCETB level. The Chaplain co-ordinates Wellbeing in the school. The Chaplain leads Wellbeing Week, Spirit Week, Peer Mentor team. The Chaplain co-ordinates Leaving Cert graduation ceremonies.

SEN Coordinator

The SEN Coordinator will be responsible and accountable for developing and coordinating a system of learning supports that enables all students to have an equal opportunity for success at school and to manage their respective curricula. This may be done by addressing barriers to learning, enhancing engagement, student advocacy, and reengaging disconnected students. She will liaise with class teachers and others in support of the development of the student. The role include liaising and communicating with management, class teachers, support staff, parents and outside agencies.

Special Needs Assistants

Special Needs Assistants assist in the care of pupils with disabilities or Special Educational Needs in an educational context. The SNA liaises with all members of the Pastoral Care team in supporting the development of the student(s) in their care.

Subject Teachers

The Subject Teachers will have regular contact with the class and will deal with simple issues as they arise. They will normally be the first to be approached by pupils. Relevant information and issues that require further attention will be passed to any member of the Care Team, depending upon the nature of the concern. The teacher will create a positive learning environment in the classroom which encompasses the development of the whole person

Student Council Liaison Teacher

- The main role of the student council liaison teacher is:
- To meet with the student council regularly and report to the Principal;
- To promote the interests of the student council;
- To assist and advise the student council;
- To be the link between students and teachers and management.

- To encourage a link with management to highlight student's needs.

Peer Mentors

Peer mentors are senior cycle students who meet with all new students throughout the school year to ensure good transitioning to the school life of St. Anne's Community College. The Chaplain meets with the Peer Mentor team at least once a half term and are a friendly face on corridors for all new students.

The Pastoral Care Team

The Pastoral Care Team is a visible representation of the school's understanding and valuing of each student as an individual. Students who experience severe difficulties in life will find it difficult to have cognitive space for learning. Therefore the rationale of the Pastoral Care team is to strive to care in a genuine way to improve the lives of students and thereby ensure access to the curriculum and learning. Members of the Pastoral Care team work hard to identify and assist students who may be in need of extra support. A Pastoral Care Team meeting is held weekly with regards to all year groups. The team meet informally as issues arise. Each case is treated confidentially on an individual basis, depending on the needs of the student.

The Pastoral Care Team is made up of staff that have direct involvement in the care issues of students:

- Chaplain
- Guidance Counsellors

Aims

1. To share information in a confidential setting
2. To coordinate a single transparent response to the care needs of a student
3. To be action focussed.
4. To review and monitor the students with care needs.

Care Team Issues

- o Attendance and Retention
- o Behaviour
- o Academic Achievement
- o Pastoral Care
- o Supports
- o Health and Welfare
- o Family Issues
- o Mental Health

- o Child Protection
- o Critical Incident supports
- o Staff Support / Development

Confidentiality

An essential element of the Care Team is maintaining clarity around the boundaries of confidentiality. It is essential for all members of the team, as well as all staff and students, to understand the concept of confidentiality in regard to child protection guidelines.

Communication

Clear communication is essential. Any member of staff can refer a student to any member of the Care Team, however, it is important that there is an understanding that a person who refers a student does not need to know the details of what has been discussed in relation to the student, but they need to be assured that the student is being cared for.

Essential Elements of the Care Team

1. Child centred/ advocate for the student
2. Professionalism and Confidentiality
3. Non-judgmental
4. Solution focused as opposed to problem focused.
5. Supported by staff, senior management and Board of Management
6. Optimistic and hopeful
7. Effective use of time and resources
8. Information sharing with wider staff
9. Accountable through record keeping

Evaluation

The team need to be reminded that they need to take care of themselves as well as the students. Reflection and evaluation are necessary. Evaluation will take place for this purpose at the end of each academic year.

Structures which Support the Pastoral Care System

Wellbeing programme

The Pastoral Care system in the school will be complimented and supported by the Wellbeing programme which has been implemented in the school since September 2017.

Code of Positive Behaviour

The school's Code of Positive Behaviour is in place to facilitate learning and teaching in a positive, safe and secure atmosphere. The Code has been developed in partnership with the staff, students, parents and management.

Recognition of Positive Behaviour – Awards Ceremony

At St. Anne's Community College, we acknowledge the value of recognising positive behaviour in motivating and encouraging our students. Every member of staff may give a student a comment in the homework journal or on VS-Ware to recognise good organisation, participation, performance, effort in school activities etc.

An Awards Ceremony is organised by at the end of each academic year to award students in the following areas:

1st Year – Subject based, Sports Awards, Extra Curricular Awards

2nd Year – Subject based, Sports Awards, Extra Curricular Awards

3rd Year – Subject based, Sports Awards, Extra Curricular Awards

5th Year – Subject based, Sports Awards, Extra Curricular Awards

6th Year – Student of the Year Awards, Nominees, Sports Awards, Extra Curricular Awards

Induction Programme

A comprehensive induction programme is in operation for:

- First Year Students
- Parents of First Year Students
- Students joining any other year group
- Transition Year students
- New Staff

Responsible Personnel;

Group	Staff member responsible
Incoming First Year Students	Head of Year, Tutors, Chaplain, Career Guidance Counsellor, Peer Mentors
Parents of First Year Students	Principal, Deputy Principal, Head of Year, Tutors, Chaplain, Career Guidance Counsellor, Peer Mentors
Students joining any other year groups	Principal, Deputy Principal, Chaplain, Career Guidance Counsellor, Head of Year, Tutors, Student Council class rep. Peer Mentors
Transition Year Students	Head of Year, TY Coordinator, Tutors, Chaplain, Career Guidance Counsellor

New staff (Droichead)	Principal, New Staff Mentor, Chaplain, Department Teachers, Lauren O'Farrelly, Colm Hayes.
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Wellbeing Week

Organised each year to coincide with World Mental Health day, events take place throughout the week to promote Positive Mental Health and to promote the services and resources there to help anyone in need

Anti-Bullying Week

Annual event taking place in the first term to encourage a 'telling culture' within our school, this week promotes all aspects of friendship and what happens when relationships break down.

Spirit Week

This event takes place in the final school term and promotes the general ethos of St. Anne's Community College. A promotion of all things good in our school encourages a sense of pride of place and fosters a positive school culture.

Pastoral Care School Self Evaluation:

Evaluation of Aims of Pastoral Care Policy:

- Evaluate stated initiatives that promoted a positive school environment and ensured that student wellbeing has being promoted in all aspects of school life.
- Evaluate how the Pastoral Care team has provided a pivotal role in the leading of teacher and student wellbeing in the school.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of the Pastoral Care team in relation to early identification of vulnerable students and those who are "at risk" or those being bullied.
- Evaluate and improve the effectiveness of the anti-bullying surveys in identifying students being bullied.
- Evaluate the support provided to students.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of the Pastoral Care team in providing the link between Student Support team and Pastoral Care Team.
- Evaluate the support given to students with regard to making their own decisions through greater self-awareness and independence.
- Evaluate programmes/initiatives put in place to recognise student talents and abilities.
- Evaluate programmes/initiatives to involve all partners in the life of the school.

- Evaluate how each person's role in the school community has been acknowledged and supported.
- Evaluate how teaching and learning relationships have been nurtured.
- Evaluation reports will be submitted on the following:
 - Wellness Week
 - Anti-Bullying Week
 - Spirit Week
 - Student Mentor System
 - Induction Programme for each year group
 - Wellbeing
 - How we recognise positive behaviour
 - Promoting and rewarding success
 - Prefect Team
 - Graduation Ceremonies

This policy will be evaluated at the end of the academic year 2022-2023 and will be reviewed if necessary.

Performance Criteria

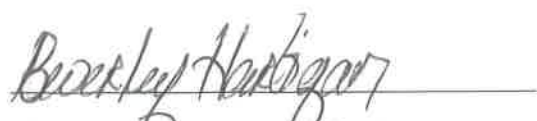
The Pastoral Care Programmes are being implemented effectively.

The Pastoral Care procedures are effective.

The Aims of the policy are being met.

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management of St. Anne's Community College at a meeting in September 2022

This policy was ratified by the board of Management on 28/09/22


Signed (School Principal)



Signed (Chairperson of the Board of Management)