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**Pastoral Care Policy**

***January 2019***

**Policy reviewed September 2018.**

**Policy ratified by BOG October 2018.**

**Policy amended January 2019.**

**This Policy will be reviewed and updated annually. Next Review Due: August 2019.**

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**Rationale:**

De La Salle College is a Catholic all ability 11 – 18 school, established by the De La Salle Brothers along with the assistance of the local parishes, welcoming its first students on 5th September 1966.

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In its 5 decades of history the school has continued to grow and flourish, reflecting the rich heritage of the West Belfast community, and our Lasallian core principals of ***Faith, Respect, Concern for Others, Quality Education and Inclusive Community***. As a Lasallian school, we have a special mission to nurture and support all our pupils particularly our most vulnerable. We believe that all students can learn and achieve, regardless of their starting point, as represented in our motto ‘Growing to Excellence’.

We aim to meet the needs and aspirations of every pupil within the College. The staff of De La Salle College believe that effective pastoral care supports pupils’ social, physical, emotional, cognitive and spiritual development and, through a carefully structured and school specific programme, aims to help enhance academic achievement and prepare pupils for adult life. All staff stress the importance of ‘pupil entitlement’ and ‘pupil needs’ and view it as essential that all pupils receive a well-rounded, holistic provision.

This policy sets out our practice in relation to the care of pupils.

**The Pastoral Care Policy Aims:**

AIM 1: The building of a Lasallian Atmosphere and community spirit which will create the conditions in which all staff can fulfil their roles and all students can be active participants in their own education.

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AIM 2: The promotion of a Pastoral Care System which will facilitate the Christian formation of all students to meet the challenges of life in modern society.

AIM 3: The provision of academic and vocational courses which will develop in each student his skills and talents; prepare each student for public examinations; develop in each student a sense of dignity, self-esteem and self-respect.

AIM 4: The provision of a Staff Development Programme to appraise the needs and aspirations of staff as they provide the commitment to and the scope for, a high quality of education.

AIM 5: The creation of an awareness by the school of the needs of the local community and the promotion of the role of the school in that community.

**Links to Other School Policies:**

The Pastoral Care Policy is an overarching policy from which other College policies flow:

* Anti-Bullying
* Child Protection
* Reasonable Force and Safe Handling
* Positive Behaviour Management
* Critical Incidents
* Special Educational Needs
* Medication Policy
* Intimate Care Policy
* Fire Evacuation
* Procedure and Acceptable use of the Toilets by Pupils.

The policy takes account of Human Rights Legislation (2003), CCEA documentation (2002) which addresses Personal Development. It also takes account of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1990).

**Roles and Responsibilities**

**The Board of Governors** has a responsibility to ensure that the pastoral provision in the College adequately reflects the College’s philosophy.

**The Principal** has a responsibility to ensure that adequate management structures are in place within the school to enable each pupil to avail of the pastoral provision to which they are entitled.

**The Vice Principals** coordinate and evaluate pastoral care throughout the College, working closely with external agencies and the Pastoral Leadership Team which comprises Key Stage Managers, Heads of Year, the SENCO and key supervisory staff.

**Key Stage Managers** have a responsibility to ensure consistency for pastoral care interventions and child protection across a key stage. They co-ordinate and monitor the work of Heads of Year and also liaise with the Vice Principals and Heads of Departments, when appropriate.

**Heads of Year** have a responsibility to ensure that each pupil in their year group receives the appropriate pastoral care interventions, including referrals for learning support and completion of referrals for counselling support. They coordinate and monitor the work of form teachers in their year group. The Head of Year will be aware of pupils who are a cause for concern and will liaise with parents, form teachers, Heads of School, the SENCO, the VP Pastoral Care and subject teachers.

**Form Teachers** are at the heart of the pastoral care system and play a special and privileged role. They are responsible for the day-to-day welfare of a small number of pupils. They know their form class intimately in terms of their background, needs, aspirations, interests and academic progress. Through mentoring and building up relationships with their form class, and their parents, they inspire and motivate pupils. They respond to group and individual problems, closely monitoring behaviour and interventions on SIMS. They meet regularly with the Head of Year to discuss the progress of their form class and to plan strategies for dealing with any difficulties.

**Subject Teachers** are aware that pastoral problems occur and are sensitive to the needs of pupils in their class. The Subject Teacher will make the form teacher aware of any real or perceived problems which arise during lessons and will cooperate in making use of the College’s pastoral structures and procedures for dealing with problems and rewarding success.

**Pupils** will abide by the Code of Conduct drawn up by the College authorities, in consultation with the Student Leadership Team. The ethos of the College and the pupils’ relationships with their peers and teachers will encourage them to seek the help and guidance of staff when problems arise. Pupils will feel confident that this help and guidance will be offered with kindness, understanding, sensitivity, patience and confidentiality.

**Parents** **and Carers** will subscribe to the philosophy of the College and have a responsibility to co-operate with the College in its effort to implement this philosophy. The College recognises parents and carers as being a source of support, which it is crucial to tap in to so that pupils benefit fully from what the College has to offer. Parents should be prepared to attend meetings and functions organised by the College for their benefit and to avail of the services which the College, and outside agencies connected to the College, have to offer. They should know their sons’ teachers, have confidence in them and feel welcomed by them to the school.

**Structures and Procedures**

The roles and responsibilities of staff members detailed in the Staff Handbook are subject to review from time to time.

Regular Pastoral Leadership Team, Key Stage Manager and Pastoral Team meetings occur throughout the year.

The College operates a clearly defined and stepped approach to interventions, rewards and referrals in each key stage.

**Form Teacher Registration and Assemblies**

Form Teachers meet their form class for fifteen minutes every morning for registration. Form Teachers are encouraged to begin registration with a prayer/reflection, read out any notices, register attendance and punctuality and also monitor behaviour on SIMS, intervening when appropriate.

Year group assemblies occur once a week under the direction of a Head of Year. Pupils are encouraged to participate in the preparation of themed assemblies.

**Counselling**

The SENCO coordinates a counselling service within the College. Counselling is provided by Ms Rachel Thompson three days per week and the Department of Education provide a counsellor from Family Works who is present in the College one day per week. Counselling is available to pupils at their own request or their parents’ request and on the recommendation of Heads of Year or the Designated Teacher for Child Protection. This compliments the College’s comprehensive Mentoring Programme.

**Review and Evaluation**

The Pastoral Leadership Team under the direction of the Vice Principals keep this policy under annual review and monitor its implementation using the quality indicators listed in Appendix 1.

**Appendix 1: Monitoring and Evaluation**

This following quality indicators, based on the document “Every School a Good School” (DE, 2009), are used to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of our Pastoral Care Policy

**Child-Centred Provision**

1. **We promote equality of opportunity, high quality learning, a concern for individual pupils and a respect for diversity**. In this regard, the College:

* Welcomes students from all faiths, races and socio-economic backgrounds
* Adheres to UNCRC principles, articles and guidelines on the rights of the child
* Has disability access arrangements and detailed admissions criteria in place
* Has well-planned induction and transition arrangements in place for all newcomers, including those with EOTAS or looked after children.
* Provides extended study facilities and homework clubs after school

1. **We seek to meet the additional learning needs of pupils and help them overcome barriers to learning by:**

* Promoting good school attendance (95% target)
* Promoting positive behaviour in and out of school
* Providing a comprehensive SEN provision in all key stages
* Providing a mentoring programme in all year groups which focuses on target-setting and pupil self-evaluation
* Linking closely with external agencies in all aspects of school life

1. **We believe in and support pupil participation and involvement in decisions about school life**. We do this through:

* The Student Council
* The Student Leadership Team
* Feedback from pupil surveys on teaching and learning, homework, behaviour, bullying etc..
* Classroom plenary sessions and Assessment for Learning feedback from pupils to teachers about teaching and learning
* Active learning methodologies, such as circle time
* Adherence to UNCRC Articles 12: Respect for the views of the child: “Every child has the right to express their views, feelings and wishes in all matters affecting them, and to have their views considered and taken seriously” and Article 13:Freedom of Expression: “Every child must be free to express their thoughts and opinions and to access all kinds of information, as long as it is within the law”.

1. **The College follows safeguarding and child protection guidelines fully**.

* Pupils know how to keep safe through meetings with their Form Teachers during daily registration and assemblies once a week with their Head of Year. Assemblies regularly focus on themes such as bullying and wellbeing. There are blue posters around the College indicating who the Safeguarding Team is. The Designated Teacher is Mrs Mairead Healy (Acting Vice Principal) and the Deputy Designated Teachers are:
* Mrs Orla Rodgers (SENCO)
* Mrs Marian O’Neill (Vice Principal)
* Mr Patrick McEvoy (Vice Principal)
* Mrs Leanne Ennis (KS4 Manager)
* Mr John Tohill (KS5 Manager)
* Mrs Veronica Hanna (Acting KS4 Manager)
* Staff Development: All teaching and non-teaching staff receive annual child protection training. The Safeguarding Team avail of updated training when appropriate from CPSSS. The College has an E-Safety Officer trained to facilitate e-safety guidance to staff and pupils.
* Parents are kept informed of policy and practice at the annual Parents’ Information Evenings for each year group at the start of term 1. Detailed policy information can be found on the College website.
* Statutory checks (Access NI) are automatically carried out for all new staff, including volunteers.

1. **We support children in making healthy choices and through the provision of a healthy environment**. We have:

* First aid facilities and the Pupil Welfare Room and health and safety arrangements on site
* A canteen and Tuck Shop which promote a healthy eating menu
* Breakfast Club facilities
* Indoor and outdoor PE facilities, available before school, at breaktimes through the school day and after school

**High Quality Teaching and Learning**

1. **We provide a broad and relevant personal development curriculum** as is evidenced by:

* Pastoral Programmes and the Preventative Curriculum which are regularly updated to include relevant topics (Yrs 8-14)
* The extensive use of external agencies to deliver a broad enrichment curriculum, especially to Years 13 & 14.
* Appropriate timetabling arrangements to deliver an effective personal development curriculum.
* Specific programmes related to health and well-being and related staff development for form teachers e.g. MindOut (mental health) and Peer Mentoring

1. **We promote positive relationships between teachers and their pupils and with other learning support staff** through:

* A Positive Behaviour Management Policy with key rules, rewards and sanctions
* A progressive Mentoring Programme across the school
* A staff Code of Conduct
* A wide range of extra-curricular activities, supervised by teaching and support staff
* Proactive supervision which is monitored daily by SLT

1. **Teachers use a range of strategies that respond to diversity within the classroom** such as:

* Active and collaborative learning methodologies
* Developing personal capabilities, including self-management and working with others

1. **Teachers reflect on their own work and the outcomes of individual pupils** through:

* Regular Pastoral Team Meetings and monitoring arrangements relating to teaching, learning, pupil progress and achievement.
* Pupils’ personal behaviour is monitored closely through SIMS and appropriate interventions applied
* Subject teachers communicate with Form Teachers when pupil performance is not meeting expectations e.g. falling assessment scores

**Effective Leadership**

1. **The College understands its responsibility for the pastoral care of pupils**. It does this by:

* Monitoring and evaluating the strategies in place for promoting pastoral care, health and well-being and attendance (all mentioned in the School Development Plan), including consultation with the Student Council, pupils and parents. This is done through the Pastoral Leadership Team under the direction of the Vice Principals.
* Monitoring the reporting of behaviour, suspension and exclusion

1. **In relation to pastoral care we support the professional development of staff and the sharing and learning from best practice** by:

* Staff development (INSET) for pastoral matters
* Employing staff with enhanced qualifications
* Sharing of good practice – within the College but also visits to other schools and hosting visits for other schools

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

* Effective staff deployment
* Specialist rooms for additional learning support
* Access to external resources e.g. counselling, SEBD support from SPSS

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

* Termly reviews of whole-school, class and individual student behaviour which are used to set priorities and update the School Development Plan
* The VP, Key Stage Managers, Head of Years and Form Teachers all have specific monitoring / evaluative duties
* School data on SIMS for attendance and behaviour management, incidents, Free School Meals (FSM) etc is used to inform planning and evaluations of interventions
* Pupil and parent questionnaires/surveys are used to inform practice
* Sampling of student target-setting and action planning (linking curricular and pastoral dimensions) are used to measure impact
* The School Council monitors and evaluates school practice in a variety of areas of school life. Recent input has focused on school facilities, extra-curricular provision, homework and bullying

**A School Connected to its Local Community**

1. **Good relationships and communication between the College, parents and the wider community are crucial to our pupils’ health and wellbeing, learning and achievement**. These are developed by:

* Making parents welcome in the school e.g. in the reception area, to discuss problems or celebrate pupil work or achievement at Prize Night or Parents’ Evenings
* Programmes to support parents and partners in their child’s education e.g. Amazing Brains Training for Parents and Carers.
* The work of the PTA and The Parents’ Consultative Group
* A wide range of school documents on the College’s website e.g. policies, revision resources / guides
* Termly School Newsletters
* Reporting to parents about their child’s personal development through formal means (reports and annual report to parents) and informal means (progress meetings, emails, phone calls, texts home)
* The College’s proactive approach in involving parents to help deal with issues such individual underperformance, behaviour, punctuality or attendance.
* A Complaints procedure to report and respond to parental concerns
* Community input to school matters such as health, wellbeing, identity and community issues through local businesses, charities and parents
* Making links across community divisions e.g. RPC programme for Year 13 & 14 students (which is under review).

1. **We have good relationships and communications between the school and the education agencies that support pupils’ health and wellbeing, learning and achievement**, namely:

* The Education Authority services e.g. Autism Advisory Intervention Service, Behaviour Support, EWO, Peripatetic Services, Psychology, SPSS, St Gerard’s Literacy Outreach etc..
* CCMS
* DENI (District Inspector – Mrs C Buhac)
* West Belfast Area of Learning Community

1. **We have good links with relevant statutory and voluntary agencies that support pupils’ health and wellbeing, learning and achievement**. These are:

* School Nurse,
* Social Services (Gateway) and PSNI / Child Protection School Support Services
* CEOP

1. **The College is involved in specific programmes that meet the needs of the community and nearby schools**. These are:

* Transition (primary to post primary)
* Sharing of physical education facilities with the local community