

Polasaí Tréadchúraim

Pastoral Care Policy

Gaelscoil Uí Néill



‘Fonn a dhéanann foghlaim’

Rationale

Gaelscoil Uí Néill is an Irish-medium school in which fondness for the Irish language and culture is fostered and it is accepted that pastoral care is a priority area in the school's ethos. The ethos is based on Christian values with emphasis on the academic, moral, spiritual and physical development of every pupil. The importance of the child's emotions is recognised.

The Pastoral Care Policy allows the school the opportunity to foster a caring environment in which the staff and pupils have respect for one another.

We recognise in Gaelscoil Uí Néill that parents and other services outside the school also have a central role. We strive to work in co-operation with each of these in order to fulfil their aims and objectives.

Aims

- to ensure that each child feels valued, special and individual and also that he/she feels a part of the school community:
- to foster children's self-respect and dignity through their academic, spiritual, moral and physical development as well as through their emotional development:
- to enable the children to initiate and develop good relations with other children, teachers and other adults:
- to provide guidance and support both inside and outside the school;
- to help children to make the most of life and to have respect for the world in which they live: and
- to help them to be responsible for their own learning and behaviour.

Inclusivity

Gaelscoil Uí Néill supports the principle that each child has the right to an education. Each child's individual needs are recognised and supported in order to ensure that each child feels a part of the school community.

Liaison with Parents

We feel that we are in partnership with parents with regard to the education of their child. Mutual support and co-operation are essential elements in the fulfilment of our aims. Among the continuous activities we undertake to ensure responsiveness and input from parents are:

- regular meetings (parents/teachers)
- curriculum meetings
- workshops
- newsletters
- yearly reports

- sponsored activities
- after-school activities
- plays/school mass

Professional Development and Training

Pastoral Care is a central element of Galescoil Uí Néill's development plan and, as a result of this, the need to train and develop the staff is recognised. This development plan helps the staff focus on attitudes, values, skills and knowledge and this enables the school to fulfil its Pastoral Care role.

Continuous training is provided in interpersonal, counselling and teaching skills that help us help the child to learn. Training is organised in various ways:

- Inservice courses
- SELB courses
- Courses from other officially recognised organisations e.g. NVQ

Liaison with services outside the school

We believe that good relations should be developed with external agencies that are in a position to help us protect the emotional, personal, social and physical development of each child.

We recognise the changes and development that children go through during their educational lives and we cater for such change and development.

Formal Curriculum

Time is provided in the curriculum for Personal and Health Education in order to develop the knowledge, values, attitudes and skills that are required. Particular strategies are provided to ensure that this program is implemented.

Time Management

It is recognised that the provision of time and resources are important for the implementation of this policy. Time is provided inside the classroom and in the teachers' training programme in order to achieve this objective.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring is a continuous element of the policy. A checklist is applied and methodologies are discussed regularly during staff meetings to ensure that the policy is implemented. Teachers are supported in the implementation of this policy when required.

Evaluation

Methodologies are evaluated regularly in order to improve the Pastoral Care program for the school's staff and pupils. Evaluation is carried out continuously in consultation with parents, pupils and staff. Questionnaires and informal interviews are used.

Support Policies

The importance of Pastoral Care for the children and the staff is recognised in every school policy. Certain policies outline specific support:

- Child Protection
- Special Needs
- Children with medical needs
- Behaviour Management
- Marking Policy

Gradually, Gaelscoil Uí Néill will be supplementing policies, e.g.

- Health and Safety
- Personal Education
- Bullying
- Appropriate use of the Internet

Organisational Structure

Gaelscoil Uí Néill has an informal structure. Lines of communication are open between the Principal and every member of staff in the school and it is understood that it is the responsibility of each member of staff to use such lines of communication when required.

Each member of staff has responsibility for this issue and it is assumed that feedback is an important element of this responsibility. It is on this feedback that the school's training and development programme will be based for the school year.