



Duiske College Pastoral Care Policy

Rationale

Duiske College endeavours to provide an environment of excellence and care for each member of the school community. We foster excellence through the highest standards in our teaching, learning and pastoral care structures. Duiske College realises its core aims and goals through a variety of means, none more important than our pastoral care approach. We understand Pastoral Care *'as an approach to education which endeavours to value and develop each member of the school community. It promotes learning at every level of the student'*. Each member of the school community has access to relevant pastoral structures and procedures. Each member of the school community is invited to play their part in contributing to the pastoral ethos of this school community. We seek to nurture positive relationships as the core resource in developing a pastoral approach. It promotes effective and caring leadership and partnership in the school community. It influences all aspects of the life of the school: policies, curriculum, roles and structures in order to sustain and enrich the educational experience of each student.

This policy aims to put in place a framework necessary to underpin and support this approach. The policy will address the following areas:

- Pastoral Roles: Definitions and Responsibilities
- Pastoral Programmes
- Pastoral Procedures
- Resources and Professional Development
- Monitoring and Evaluation

1. Pastoral Roles: Definitions and Responsibilities

Every member of staff contributes to student support in the school. There are key roles however, which carry significant support dimensions and responsibilities.

Class Tutor

- A class teacher, on behalf of the school community undertakes the role of caring for a particular class group with responsibility in the pastoral and academic areas.

- They get to know the students as individuals. They have an awareness of and support students with difficulties.
- They foster positive class spirit and boost class morale. They act as a friendly guide and motivator to individuals and the general class group.
- They oversee the student journal and monitor notes.
- They encourage class involvement in all activities that promote the ethos of the school.
- Class teachers meet once a month formally.

Student Support Team

This team brings together all the support services of the school to review how the school is responding to the overall needs of the student and in particular students facing challenges. The team plays a part in supporting class teachers, reviewing students with particular difficulties and advising relevant groups within the school community on pastoral issues.

- This team meets once per week.
- The team consists of Principal, Deputy Principal, SEN Coordinator, Guidance Counsellor, HSCL, SCP coordinator and project worker
- Issues discussed include school student issues,
- This is an opportunity for liaison between the Student Support Team and the senior management
- The Student Support Team encourages and supports student development programmes such as induction programmes etc.
- Minutes of all meetings are recorded and filed.

Guidance Counsellor

The Guidance Counsellor participates in and co-ordinates the school guidance and counselling service. This participation can be categorised under three integrated areas of activity:

- Personal / Social Guidance and Counselling
- Educational Guidance and Counselling
- Vocational Guidance and Counselling

This service is central to our pastoral care provision and involves a range of activities which include:

- Counselling
- Assessment
- Information gathering, organisation and dissemination
- Educational Development Programmes
- Referral
- Consultation with parents, teachers and pupils

- Guidance activities to help students make transitions
- Administration
- Evaluation

An explanation of these activities is contained in the Guidance Plan.

HSCL (Home School Community Liaison)

- The HSCL scheme recognises the parent/ guardian's role as the primary educators in their child's life.
- Work with parents in order to develop their capacity as a key resource in their children's learning.
- Links with and work with the key players in the local community, so that they can add value to what is done in the school, in relation to attendance, participation and retention.
- Home visitation is a large part of the role. During these visits the coordinator offers school supports and works in a supportive and purposeful way with parents.
- Provides educational courses/ talks and recreational opportunities for parents throughout the year.
- Enable parents and guardians be more involved in the school and more involved in their child's education.

A further explanation of these activities is contained in the HSCL policy.

SEN Co-ordinator (Special Educational Needs)

Responsibilities:

- To co-ordinate provision for students with special educational needs
- To advise the Principal on a regular basis regarding SEN
- To facilitate the construction of Individual Education Plans which are directed towards meeting students' individual needs
- To co-ordinate the development of school based strategies for the identification and assessment of pupils with SEN
- To liaise with and advise fellow teachers
- To work closely with the Student Support Team through regular attendance at meetings which review the school's response to the overall needs of students with challenges
- To oversee the records of all students with special educational needs
- To liaise with external agencies: RACE, SENO, NEPS, CAMHS, etc.

2. Pastoral Care Programmes and Events

- The school has a commitment to Wellbeing, PE, Guidance, SPHE and RSE and demonstrates this in its provision on the curriculum.
- An induction programme exists for incoming first year students.
- A mentoring programme is in place for the first year students.
- Study skills and approaches are provided annually with particularly focus on students sitting state exams.
- Anti-Bullying work highlights awareness of the importance of relationships with others and respect for difference.
- School community celebrations of Christmas through a carol service and annual Shoebox appeal.
- Health Promotion Week highlights awareness of healthy body, mind and spirit.
- Talks in relation to mental wellbeing are organised regularly for students and parents.
- Internet safety talks are provided regularly for students

3. Pastoral Procedures

The foundation stone of the pastoral structure in the school is the class teacher system supported by management, the guidance team, SEN, SCP (School Completion Programme) and student support team.

This school has a number of policies which outlines procedures to support students. Please refer to the Code of Behaviour, Wellbeing Policy, Anti-Bullying, Critical Incident, Guidance Plan, SPHE (Social, Personal and Health Education) Plan, SEN Policy, etc.

In the area of information we are committed to dealing respectfully and sensitively with information that is received, shared, stored and accessed.

The school has a works with a local EWO (Educational Welfare Officer) who focuses on the area of attendance and is supported by the Regional EWO.

4. Resources and Professional Development

This school is committed to providing the necessary resources to underpin this pastoral policy. The SEN Coordinator and Guidance Counsellor attend yearly conferences to keep abreast of new developments, build contacts and maintain links with appropriate support agencies. Guidance Counsellors regularly counselling supervision, and also CPD (Continued Professional Development) provided by the Kilkenny branch of the IGC (Institute of Guidance Counsellors). Student Support Team members are affiliated members of professional bodies and attend regular meetings. General in-service / staff development is supported and facilitated by management.

5. Monitoring and Evaluation of Policy

Effective policy requires constant monitoring and evaluation to ensure successful implementation and to review what adjustments may be necessary from time to time. This policy is to be reviewed at the end of the school year.

To be reviewed: September 2026