



# Pastoral Care Policy

*Policy Date:* \_\_\_\_\_

*Signature of Principal:* \_\_\_\_\_

*Signature of Chairperson of Board of Governors:* \_\_\_\_\_

*Review Date:* \_\_\_\_\_

## Rationale

At Gortin Primary school we have a statutory obligation to educate our children but we also have a responsibility towards the welfare of all the children and staff at our school.

Pastoral care is inherent in every aspect of our life at Gortin Primary School. It is evident in all our relationships and in the teaching and learning.

Through our Pastoral Care Policy we aim to:

- Promote confidence, self-esteem and independence
- Have clear and effective communication
- Promote a sense of purpose and belonging
- Support staff and children's development

### **Ethos**

Our Mission Statement – “working together to achieve our best”

The Board of Governors and staff of Gortin Primary School strive to create an emotionally and physically safe, caring and supportive environment in which learning and teaching take place and we meet our legal obligations. All will work towards developing the academic, personal, aesthetic, social, cultural, moral and spiritual potential of each child. We will provide opportunities for all children to experience achievement and success irrespective of gender, race, religion or ability. We believe that the educational process is a partnership involving teachers, children, parents, Board of Governors and the local community.

### **GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

We encourage all pupils to reach their true potential and eventually become independent learners, who value learning with and from others, i.e. have a positive attitude to life-long learning and who can show initiative.

We value application, perseverance, initiative and independence of thought and action, as well as co-operative endeavours.

We will develop in pupils a positive attitude (including health and fitness) towards themselves and others with a strong sense of self-respect.

We will empower pupils with the knowledge and skills necessary to participate in life of a modern technological society.

We will encourage pupils to appreciate human achievements, failures and aspirations.

### **General aims of the school**

We aim to promote:

- The development of the child holistically, to fulfil his/her personal, social, academic, emotional, physical, cultural, aesthetic and practical potential;
- A range of desirable qualities such as initiative, independence, politeness, perseverance, safety awareness, concern for others and the environment
- A sense of respect for other people's property, ideas and beliefs, irrespective of gender, race, disability, academics achievement or religious persuasion

- A sense of moral values which can form a framework for a sense of self-worth and support relationships with others, so that pupils may become responsible members of society
- Praise and encouragement to positively develop learning and good behaviour and to involve the whole school community in the celebration of their achievements

### **Pastoral Care Provision**

Pastoral care permeates all aspects of school life and is most effective when it is fully integrated into the school's daily routines, both curricular and extra-curricular. There are diverse elements within the Pastoral Care provision for our school. Central to our pastoral care provision is the recognition that:

- every child in our care has the fundamental right to be protected from harm
- effective learning will only occur if the child feels secure

The Pastoral Care Policy is supported by the following policies:

Teaching and Learning

Positive Behaviour

Anti-bullying

Child Protection

Special Educational Needs

Attendance

Health and Safety

Drugs Education

Smoke –Free

Administration of Medicines

Nutrition

Health Education

Relationships and Sexuality

Safe Use of the Internet

Staff Emotional Health and Well-being

Care in the sun

First Aid

Intimate Care

The pastoral dimension is to be seen in all areas throughout the school and should be particularly visible in the following areas:

Religious Education/Assemblies

Extra-curricular activities

Links with local and wider community

PDMU/PATHS/QCT

Involvement with other agencies

Teaching and Learning

Our Teaching and Learning and Curriculum policies aim to ensure that the children at our school are provided with high quality learning experiences that lead to a consistently high level of pupil achievement.

We believe that children learn through their total experience. This policy guides what children do, what teachers do, how time is managed, the organisation of the classroom and what the school as an organisation does to create an effective and well-managed learning

environment in which the individual needs of each child can be met. (See Teaching and Learning policy)

### Child Protection

We at Gortin Primary School recognise that we have an explicit duty to safeguard and protect children from abuse as defined in the Children Act 2004 and the Education Act 2002. The problem of child abuse will not be ignored by anyone who works in our school. The overall intention and purpose behind the school's Child Protection Policy is underpinned by the fundamental principle of the Children(NI) order 1995, the Department of Education(NI) guidance 'Pastoral Care in School/Child Protection' (DENI circular 99/10 and the Area Child Protection Committees' Regional Policy and Procedure (2005) : 'The **welfare of the child is paramount**'.

Everyone at Gortin Primary School shares an objective to help keep children safe by:

- Providing a safe environment for children to learn in.
- Supporting children's development in ways which will foster a sense of self-esteem and independence
- Identifying and responding to children in need of support and/or protection

(See Child Protection Policy)

### SEN

Our policy reflects and guides current practices in Gortin Primary School for children with Special Educational Needs/Disabilities. Our aim is to nurture the development of our pupils in keeping with our values so that they can become the fullest possible people socially, academically, morally, intellectually, spiritually, culturally and make a valuable contribution to society. In line with SEN all staff in this school believe in an inclusive ethos and that every pupil has an entitlement to develop their full potential while being educated alongside their peers. (See Special Needs Policy).

### Religion

Religion is an important element of the school's life. The teaching of RE in each year group is based on the core syllabus for N. Ireland and is of a non-denominational Christian character. We aim to develop in our pupils a pride in their own self- worth and recognition of the value of people from other religious, social or cultural backgrounds. It will be taught as an area of study on its own or integrated with other subjects. Morning assembly will be held on 1/2 mornings of each week in a mutually, caring environment with the local minister leading one of these assemblies and occasionally visiting speakers.

### Attendance

Gortin Primary School is committed to providing a full and efficient education to all pupils. We embrace the concept of equal opportunities for all.

We will endeavour to provide an environment where all pupils feel valued and welcome.

For a child to reach their full educational achievement a high level of school attendance is essential. We will consistently work towards a goal of 100% attendance for all children.

Every opportunity will be used to convey to pupils and their parents or carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance.

### Health and Safety

The health and safety of all the people who work or learn at our school are of fundamental importance. We aim to provide a safe, secure and pleasant working environment for everyone. The Board of Governors, along with the EA, takes responsibility for protecting the health and safety of all children and members of staff.

### Positive Behaviour

Gortin Primary School believe that each child has the right to be educated in a safe and secure environment where each child's moral, intellectual, personal, social and emotional development is promoted. Parents and carers are informed and reassured that their children are being educated in a safe, caring and respectful atmosphere. We believe that good discipline can only be achieved in partnership with the children, staff, Board of Governors and parents. Discipline procedures should be clearly defined and communicated to parents and children. Children should be treated fairly, positively and consistently. Positive encouragement should be evident. All staff have the right to work in a safe and secure environment. (See Positive Behaviour policy)

### Drugs Policy

Gortin Primary School aim to achieve the highest possible standards of health and safety for its pupils, employees, visitors and members of the public. As a consequence, no pupil, teacher, employee, visitor or member of the public may consume alcohol, be suffering from the effects of alcohol while on the school premises. This rule also applies to the use/effect of illegal drugs. We believe that we have a vital preventative role to play in combating the misuse of drugs by young people and we therefore include an education programme in our curriculum. (See Drugs Policy)

### Smoke Free Policy

Smoking is an addictive habit generally acquired in childhood, which causes an appalling amount of preventable death, disability and suffering. In Northern Ireland, over 3,000 people die every year because of smoking. Passive smoking, once thought to be only a nuisance, is now also acknowledged to be harmful to health.

This school has a responsibility to promote healthy lifestyles and, in pursuit of this, teaches pupils about the hazards of smoking as part of the health education cross-curricular theme. The school wishes to provide an environment which complements and does not negate this teaching. It also wishes to protect the health of staff, pupils, users of and visitors to the school. (See Smoke free Policy)

### Administration of Medicines

At Gortin Primary School, we acknowledge the importance of having an agreed procedure on the occasions when children require medication, whether this be long term or short term. From time to time, parents request that the school should dispense medicines which need to be administered at regular intervals to children. **Generally, no member of staff will administer medicine to children. Parents are responsible for the administration of medicine to their children.** However, if it is unavoidable that a child has to take medicine in school for treatment for a long-term illness to be effective, then each individual case will be considered. (See Administration of Medicines Policy)

### Nutrition

We seek to encourage good habits in children's diets and where possible, involve children's families in considering the importance of nutrition for the growing child. We also receive support for this from external agencies. We believe that a balanced diet will optimise children's learning experiences. (See Nutrition Policy)

#### Health Education/Health Promoting School

It is our school's intention to enable children to become confident, independent and co-operative learners, well informed of issues relating to keeping themselves and others safe and healthy. We aim to be a health promoting school providing healthy break/snack and encouraging healthy lunch boxes with the support of parents. The school in the past have been successful in achieving silver and gold awards.

#### Relationships and Sexuality

Gortin Primary School is committed to the education of children regardless of race, religion, gender or status. Relationships and sexuality are integral parts of the human personality and impact biologically, psychologically, culturally, socially and spiritually. The Christian ethos is the cornerstone of our relationships and sexuality policy. RSE is a life-long process involving the acquisition of knowledge, understanding and skills and the development of attitudes, beliefs, morals and values. (See Relationships and Sexuality Education Policy)

#### Safe Use of the Internet

Access to the internet and electronic communications is available at Gortin Primary School. We believe this offers an excellent opportunity for both pupils and staff to have access to a wide variety of resources and information. Our school Internet service is filtered, hence, reducing the risks of unsuitable material being viewed. However, no system is fool proof and therefore we feel it is appropriate to develop a set of guidelines which set out the parameters of acceptable use. We inform parents of the benefits of its safe use and encourage parents to sign up to a contract in support of its safe use. (See safe use of Internet policy)

#### Staff Emotional Health and Well-Being

Gortin Primary School aims to provide a sensitive and effective support through a variety of sources in order to help its staff to resolve to the benefit of both the individual and the school, any personal and workplace concerns, problems or difficulties they may encounter. In line with our Pastoral Care Policy we aim to 'ensure concern for the development of the whole person.' We believe that the Physical and Emotional Health and Well-being of staff is vitally important to ensure that the children in our care are given the best possible care. (See Staff Emotional health and Well-Being policy)

#### Responsibility for Pastoral Care

Pastoral Care is the responsibility of every member of staff but is supported through links with parents, BOG, the community and outside agencies. Pastoral Care will be coordinated by:

Principal: Mrs I Wallace

Designated Teacher: Mrs O Dixon

**Monitoring and Evaluating the Policy**

Our policy will be reviewed triennially and/or in the light of changes in legislation or practice following consultation with all staff members, parents and external agencies.