

PASTORAL CARE POLICY



Mercy College Sligo
BOM Ratified

Mission Statement

Mercy College, Sligo is an all-girls Catholic school with a co-educational AONA under the trusteeship of CEIST. Mercy College is dedicated to the provision of quality Catholic education, academic, spiritual, global, moral, physical, social, aesthetic and vocational which will enable students to achieve their maximum potential in a caring and nurturing environment.

Our mission statement is clearly rooted in a pastoral care type philosophy of education. It fosters the holistic development of each individual student and teacher within an atmosphere of care, concern and respect.

Rationale for this Policy

Pastoral care is the energy of concern that underpins everything we do in Mercy College. Rooted in our Mission statement, all aspects of school life from academic to spiritual, social to cultural as well as physical and emotional development of students is our concern. We strive to allow the development of each member of the school community and promote learning at every level for our students.

Aims & Objectives

1. To foster a happy school community
2. To care for the individual student
3. To allow the full potential of each student to develop
4. To foster positive staff-student relationships
5. To encourage a sense of social justice within the school community
6. To establish and maintain a good rapport between school, community and home

Pastoral Care Team Members

Anne Gorby (Principal & DLP)
Lorraine Sherlock (Deputy Principal & DDLP)
Nicola Moran/Gavin McGuinness (Guidance Counsellor)
Mary Rose Maguire (Support Worker)
Noreen McIntyre (Chaplain)
Michael Yewlett (Home Youth Liaison Officer)
Eysha Garvey (School Completion Officer)
Year Heads

Chain of Support at Mercy College

Student - Buddy - Mentor - Class Prefect - Senior Prefect - Class Tutor - Year Head - Guidance Counsellor/HYLO/SCO/Check and Connect/ - Chaplain - Deputy Principal - Principal - BOM

Roles and Responsibilities

Principal/Deputy Principal

1. Make provision for Pastoral Care input into the timetable
2. Leadership in building school community
3. Attendance at Care Team Meetings
4. Liaising with Care Team members
5. Liaising with Parents/Guardians on issues arising
6. Liaising with outside agencies e.g. HSE, Duty Social Workers, Meitheal etc.
7. Encouragement of all activities, social, academic, sporting, musical etc.
8. Acknowledgement (and where appropriate reward) of all efforts and achievements in all different areas
9. Awareness (and where possible, provision of) special needs, books, materials, uniforms, lunches etc.

Care Team Members

1. Attendance at Care Team Meetings
2. Referral of issues arising to DLP where appropriate
3. Liaising and planning strategies with Care Team members
4. Liaising with Parents/Guardians on issues arising
5. Liaising with outside agencies e.g. HSE, Duty Social Workers, ION etc.
6. Follow up on actions agreed at Care Team Meetings
7. Record keeping
8. Dissemination of information to relevant staff members in a confidential manner
9. Use of the 'Zone In/Zone Out' board

Year Head

1. Liaising with Class Tutors/Principal/Deputy Principal/Guidance Counsellor/Behaviour for Learning teacher/Other Staff on a regular basis
2. Liaising with Parents/Guardians
3. Referral to the DLP where appropriate
4. Liaising with Care Team members on issues arising
5. Creating a positive atmosphere within the year group, thus promoting welfare and development of students
6. Organising and running assemblies
7. Liaising with BfL Teacher on induction of new students
8. Dissemination of information to staff in a confidential manner

Tutor

1. There will be a 10 minute "roll call" each morning. The purpose of this time is to:
 - (a) Call the roll
 - (b) Check notes re absenteeism etc.
 - (c) Check uniforms
 - (d) Provide an opportunity for information flow i.e. teacher - student, student- teacher
 - (e) To provide a listening and encouraging environment
 - (f) Where appropriate provide a quiet moment of reflection i.e. morning reflection
2. The tutors' role is one of caring for a class group in order to promote learning and the holistic development of each individual
3. Liaising with Parents/Guardians
4. Liaising with Care Team members
5. Dealing with student concerns
6. Referral to DLP/Guidance Counsellor/support worker where appropriate

BOM

1. To ensure that the policy is developed in consultation with the partners in education
2. To ensure that the policy is effective, implemented and reviewed

Belonging Plus Programme: First Year Induction

The Behaviour for Learning teacher co-ordinates a timetable of activities for the incoming students' first week at Mercy College. During this week, students learn a diverse range of information in order to equip them for life in Mercy College as well as taking part in fun events in order to encourage friendships and bonding as a year group.

Topics covered include:

- a full and comprehensive explanation of their timetable
- the necessity of correct timekeeping
- organisation of their locker and when to go to their locker
- the importance of the journal is emphasised and students are taught how to use their journal
- explicit teaching of learning strategies

Whole-school activities contributing to the Pastoral Care System:

- Guidance & Counselling
- Behaviour for Learning

- Merit System
- Shine A Light Campaign
- Peace Police
- Friends for Life
- SPHE monthly check in
- ALERT Programme
- Counselling
- CRIB/Foroige
- St Vincent de Paul Outreach Project
- Tanzanian Outreach Project
- Indian Outreach Project
- Lunchtime activities
- Opening of school year liturgy
- Outings/tours
- Mentoring system
- Senior Prefect team
- Sports
- Drama
- Carol Service
- Graduation Liturgy
- 1st Year Liturgy
- School Musical
- Choirs
- Hospital visitation
- Participation in charitable events e.g. Concern Fast
- Cyberbullying awareness: Safebook
- Restorative Justice Practices
- Conflict Resolution
- Subject support for disadvantaged students
- Canteen/Study Vouchers for disadvantaged students
- Annual diocesan trip to Lourdes
- Professional speakers on issues of pastoral care e.g. mental health, cyberbullying, stress management

Review

This policy is reviewed at the beginning of each school year.