

ST. DAVID'S CBS PASTORAL CARE POLICY



St David's CBS Mission Statement

St. David's is a Catholic School, promoting Christian values, that provide opportunities for every student to achieve his full potential in academic, artistic, social and sporting spheres in an atmosphere that promotes responsibility, tolerance and respect for others.

St. David's CBS core aims and vision is demonstrated in our mission statement above and we are committed to fostering a safe and secure environment for all our students whilst encouraging our students to strive for excellence in both curricular and co-curricular activities. Pastoral Care in our school is a whole-school approach and facilitating an environment of mutual respect and care for every member of the school community is at the heart of our policy and actions.

There are many spokes to the Pastoral Care Wheel in St. David's CBS and each spoke plays an integral role in providing a supportive programme to our students. School Pastoral Care is the responsibility of the entire school and specific programmes and roles are in place to develop a sense of belonging, value and care for all our students.

Pastoral Care Roles and Responsibilities

Board of Management

The BOM ensures that there is a Pastoral Care Policy in place and that it is operational, in addition to supporting pastoral care initiatives and programmes in the school.

Principal and Deputy Principal

The Principal and Deputy Principal engage in meaningful work with all school partners and are committed to supporting all those involved in providing a pastoral role. Very often they are the first point of contact for both students and parents and are ensuring an empathic and caring space is prioritised at all times.

Class Teacher

The class/subject teacher in their role of providing effective teaching and learning will endeavor to promote a sense of respect and fairness for each other and create an environment where individuality and uniqueness is valued and a relationship is fostered where students are encouraged to make informed decisions and seek help when required. The class teacher will refer a student where appropriate to the Class Tutor, Year Head, Principal, Deputy Principal, Guidance Counsellor or Home School Liaison Officer.

Class Tutor

The Class tutor is a key connection point for the student and is in tune with every aspect of the young person's development including intellectual, social, moral, behavioural and emotional. Class tutors seek to encourage and promote the healthy well being of each student and referral to the Principal, Deputy Principal, Year Head, Home School Liaison Officer, Behaviour for Learning Teacher and Guidance Counsellor is an important part of their role.

Year Head

The Year Head undertakes the care of the Year Group and concentrates their efforts specifically on academic progress and the behaviour of students. The Year Head monitors the students attendance, punctuality, behaviour and progress therefore they are in continuous contact with both students and their parents. The Year Head will liaise with subject teacher, class tutor, principal, deputy principal, HSL, BLT and GC when appropriate.

Home School Liaison

The HSL supports parents in the education of their children. The HSL offers a systematic approach to establishing good rapport with parents through home visitation and encouraging parents to become involved in the school community. The work of the HSL is both a symbolic and real expression of interest in families, many of which have been alienated from the educational system in the past. The HSL plays a significant role in the provision of care for our students. The HSL provides support to parents, students, subject teachers, class tutors, year heads, GC, BFL, Principal and Deputy Principal.

Guidance Counsellor

The GC coordinates and participates in the school Guidance and Counselling service which endeavours to assist students to develop self-management skills which lead to effective choices and decisions about their lives. It encompasses three separate but interlinked areas, Personal and Social Development, Educational Guidance and Career Guidance. Counselling is a key part of the school guidance programme offered on an individual or group basis as part of a developmental learning process and at moments of personal crisis. The GC works closely with the Principal, Deputy Principal, HSL, BFL, Chaplain, SEN Co-ordinator, Year Heads and Subject Teachers to ensure a comprehensive service is provided to all students. Communication with parents and outside agencies is an integral part of the role.

Chaplain

The school offers a multitude of services through the chaplain. The chaplain is responsible for ensuring the Catholic ethos of the school is apparent through various liturgical seasonal displays,

the organisation of Masses for the students, prayer services, Edmund Rice education and spiritual guidance where necessary. The chaplain also offers one to one student support - predominantly for grief counselling but also looking at the general well being of students. The chaplain is a faith presence in the school promoting the caring, kind and considerate values of the Christian religion that is inclusive and tolerant of all beliefs and cultures. Moreover, the chaplain's pastoral role in the school is to help guide and support all of its students. Lastly, the chaplain is also part of the Positive Behaviour Strategy Team which encourages students to behave in a positive and reflective way.

Special Educational Needs Co-Ordinator

The principal aim of the Special Educational Needs Co-Ordinator is to optimise the teaching and learning process in order to enable pupils with learning difficulties to achieve adequate levels of proficiency in literacy and numeracy. With this the SEN Co-ordinator ensures that the needs of the students are communicated effectively to parents and their sons aswell as their teachers to optimize the teaching and learning process. The SEN Co-ordinator refers students where appropriate to the Class Tutor, Year Head, Management, HSL, GC and outside agencies.

Behaviour for Learning Teacher (BFL)

The BFTL works with students who are presenting with behavioural difficulties in order to improve their behaviour and enable them to learn more effectively. The BFL liaises with the HSCL, GC, SEN Co- Ordinator, Resource Teachers and Subject teachers in order to draft Behaviour for Learning Plans. In addition the BFL liaises with the Pastoral Care Team, Inclusion Team, Strategy Team, Subject Teachers and Year Heads to identify students in need of Behavioural Modification Programmes. Regular contact with parents of students attending classes with regard to behaviour is maintained.

Pastoral Care Team

The Pastoral (Care) Team meets once a week and committee members include the HSL, GC, BFL, SEN Co-Ordinator, Deputy Principal, School Completion Co-ordinator and 1st/2nd/3rd year Year Heads. The aim is to provide additional support for 'at risk' students to help them to make the most of the educational opportunity available to them. The Pastoral Care Team works closely with students providing specific support structures to provide opportunities for students to reach their full potential and to keep students within the education system. The Pastoral Care Team works in conjunction with outside agencies when necessary including the National Behaviour Support Service (NBSS) and the National Educational Psychological Service (NEPs)

Positive Behaviour Strategy Team

The overall aim of the team is to roll out a Positive Behaviour Expectations in 2019 - 2020 that encompasses the school ethos of care, respect and quality education for all. All stakeholders will

be involved in the process, Management, Teachers, Students and Parents. The Expectations will be a whole school document which will set out three clear guidelines for all students to engage and follow. At the heart of the Expectations is the development of a shared respect for each other by adopting positive behaviours that reflect this.

Non-Teaching Staff

Non-Teaching staff have an important input to make in the pastoral care of our students and every effort is made by non-teaching staff to communicate any concerns or worries they observe to management and to treat all our students with equal care.

Pastoral Care Programmes

Religious Education

Through the implementation of the RE programme, caring values and morals are communicated to the students. The RE teachers promote in each pupil a knowledge of their faith and its practice in everyday life. The RE class helps students to experience a sense of place in our school community and cultivate an openness to other religious traditions.

Social Personal and Health Education

The SPHE programme in the school provides students with the opportunity to develop self-awareness skills and competencies to make informed decisions about their health in addition to their personal and social development. SPHE provides opportunities for reflection and discussion and promotes good self-esteem and confidence.

New Junior Cert WellBeing Curriculum

“ Student Wellbeing is present when students realise their abilities, take care of their physical wellbeing, can cope with the normal stresses of life, and have a sense of purpose and belonging to a wider community ” (NCCA)

The Six Indicators of WellBeing, Active, Aware, Connected, Responsible, Resilient and Respected are all integrated through CSPE, PE and SPHE in 1st & 2nd year. In addition, our current 1st years 2018 -2019 are participating in six taught WellBeing Modules (Fitness & Health, Positive Self Talk, Mind Maps, Online Activity, Study Skills 1 and Study Skill 2)

Meditation

Meditation classes were introduced to St David’s in 2012. Mindfulness classes were introduced in 2014. In the modern world young people are constantly bombarded with information and

stimulation. Students are unable to live in the present and levels of insomnia have risen greatly. Meditation gives students the tools to help them relax and cope with difficult situations. Students learn to 'be still', which is increasingly difficult with present day distractions (e.g. social media, mobile devices etc.). There is growing evidence on the benefits of meditation. Research shows meditation increases memory and improves attention. It has been shown to promote positive thinking, reduce depression and lower stress levels. At present all classes, from first to sixth year, have an opportunity to take meditation (or mindfulness) class (one period per week for one hour).

WellBeing Week

Each Year the school holds a WellBeing Week where students engage in a number of activities and talks to promote both positive mental and physical health. The week includes a mix of Whole School Activities, Year Group Activities and Class activities. **Breakfast Mornings, 5km Walks, Fitness Day, Meditation, Mindful Colouring, Motivation and Mental Health Talks** are all part of the week. Students are encouraged to become aware of their own WellBeing and the Wellbeing of their peers. There is a strong focus on developing a shared sense of place and connectedness and the benefits of engaging in physical activities.

Friendship Week

Each year the school holds a Friendship Week and the value of Friendships is actively promoted to all year groups. Programmes included are **Conversation Circle Time** (First year students meet with their TY Peer Mentors to discuss in small groups their transition to St David's) **Special Friend/ Act of Kindness Nominee** and **Poster and Poetry Competitions** (on theme of Friendship and Anti- Bullying)

In **Junior Cycle SPHE** all 1st, 2nd and 3rd year students follow the SPHE Curriculum fostering students awareness of the importance of social, personal and health education.

In **Senior Cycle Religion** all TY, 5th and 6th year Religion classes cover the following themes from RSE curriculum e.g. Sexuality, Self Esteem, General Wellbeing and the impact it can have on relationships and friendships.

TY Mentoring

TY Mentoring of students who are in need of extra support is a programme that runs throughout the school year. The purpose of the initiative is for a TY student to support a junior year student who is experiencing poor organisation skills and difficulty transitioning from primary to secondary school. The TY mentor acts as a role model with the overall aim of instilling confidence and helping the student to engage fully in their educational process.

Home Mentoring

A student receives 1:1 support in his own home which helps the student to feel more connected to the school. It provides support to students who are at risk of leaving school early and support to their parents who are unable to provide the structured home support needed to succeed in school.

Group Meetings

Group meetings are held on a regular basis where the parent, student, HSL and Year Head are present in an effort to bring the parents closer to their children's learning and to provide opportunities for "at risk" students to engage fully in their own learning process. The well being and the care of the student is at the heart of the process aswell as the desire to effect change in their own behaviour.

Class Meetings

Class meetings are held between the parents and all class teachers once a year to provide an informal introduction and setting to ensure good communication is initiated between parents and the school. It is strongly felt that students are capable of making further progress as a result of this meeting.

6th Year Mentoring

All 6th year students are linked in with a teacher who provides additional guidance and support during their Leaving Certificate Year. The teacher acts as a mentor and encourages the student to participate fully in his education and to set out clear goals to help him reach their potential.

First Year Induction Programme

The transition from primary into secondary school is a big step in a young adults life and our school prioritises the needs of all first years as they begin their schooling in St. David's CBS. First year students are set up with a Transition Year student as part of a school buddy system. Students are presented with a welcome pack and considerable time is taken to ensure all students are settled into their new surroundings and feel comfortable asking for help and mixing with new students and teachers.

Extra - Curricular Activities

The school provides a comprehensive array of extra-curricular activities through the wide variety of sports available such as Gaelic football, hurling, rugby, soccer, outdoor pursuits, athletics, golf, badminton and basketball. In addition the school encourages students to become involved in music, drama and debating. After school meditation classes are offered to sixth year students during their Leaving Certificate year. Through a student's involvement in extra-curricular

activities it is hoped that the student's sense of belonging is developed along with enhancing a good rapport with both the leading teacher and fellow students.

The **Pastoral Care Policy** is a working document and outlines the specific roles and programmes that are in place to promote and care for the needs of all our students. Record keeping of student's progress and behaviour is part of this process as is the detailing all of the necessary supports available to the student to ensure a structured and systematic approach is given to Pastoral Care in the school.