

REGENT HOUSE SCHOOL



PASTORAL CARE POLICY

1. Rationale

Regent House School is committed to maximising the learning potential of all pupils and providing education and pastoral support of the highest quality. The school recognises that all members of staff play an important role in supporting the academic progress, personal development and social and emotional wellbeing of the pupils. Regent House is committed to ensuring that pupils leave school with the skills, attitudes and behaviours which will enable them to realise their full potential in the world of work, in relationships and as active citizens in the modern world.

2. Definition

Pastoral care refers to the academic, social and emotional support provided to pupils in order to ensure their needs are being met and to enable them to grow academically, emotionally and personally.

3. Aims and Objectives

Regent House School aims to

- create a supportive atmosphere in which every pupil will enjoy a rounded education
- ensure that trust and mutual respect underpin all relationships
- encourage each pupil to develop a strong sense of personal worth, social responsibility and consideration for others
- provide personal guidance and counselling appropriate to the needs of every pupil
- deliver a curriculum which meets the needs of every pupil
- provide high quality careers education, information advice and guidance to assist every pupil in making the transition from school to adult life
- deliver a programme of personal and social education appropriate to the needs of all pupils.

4. Procedures

Regent House consults with staff, parents and pupils when initiating, reviewing and revising pastoral policies. Policies are reviewed regularly and key policies relating to care and support are available on the school website and from the Office and are communicated to all parents.

The Safeguarding Team oversees the policies and procedures relating to the care and safeguarding of pupils, as well as all day to day duties.

The Principal and Designated Child Protection Teachers avail of regular training and pupils are aware of procedures to follow should they wish to seek support.

A counselling service is provided within the school through Family Works and the school has its own counsellor Mrs Gourley.

The curriculum structure and the organisation of the school day facilitate regular contact between key pastoral staff and pupils through form time, personal development, the Learning for Life and Work curriculum and year group assemblies.

Regular meetings are held whereby Heads of Year, Heads of School and Heads of Department may share information and best practice to ensure that the needs of the pupils are met.

Pastoral Teams within each Key Stage meet regularly to plan and review practice, to discuss individual pupil concerns as well as wider issues relating to policies and new initiatives in order to provide support for the pupils.

Strong links have been established with a range of external agencies to enhance the support provided for pupils.

Regent House offers a wide range of leadership opportunities to pupils through the house system, mentoring schemes, the roles of Mentor, Learning mentor, Student Council representative, social and charity events, Young Enterprise, wide participation in the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme, and the Sixth Form leadership team which includes Prefects and Senior Prefects.

5. Roles and responsibilities

There is a clear pastoral structure with clear roles and responsibilities understood. The primary responsibility for the care and welfare of pupils rests with the Board of Governors. However, the school recognises that all staff share responsibility for the pastoral care of pupils and seeks to ensure that they are equipped to discharge their duties. Staff training regularly addresses pastoral care issues, and a number of members of staff are appointed to play a leading role. The Principal and Vice Principal oversee the pastoral care, supported by a Senior Teacher. Every key stage has a Head of School, within each Year group a Head of Year for Girls and Boys is appointed and is supported by a team of Form Teachers.

Also central to pastoral care is the Special Educational Needs Co-ordination (SENCo), the Matron and the School Counsellor. Classroom Assistants, the Study Supervisors, Careers staff, PE and Games staff, Groundstaff, canteen staff and lunchtime supervisors, staff in charge of clubs and societies and canteen staff also play a significant role, as do Pupil Mentors, School Counsellors, Prefects and Senior Prefects. The school also works with external agencies where appropriate.

All members of staff are expected to have knowledge of the needs, aspirations, interests, academic progress and emotional well-being of each pupil in their care. Knowing individual pupils in this way enables teachers to motivate the pupils, to respond to their individual problems, to approach issues of discipline positively and to help them to benefit from all the opportunities which the school has to offer.

Relationships are built and developed over the course of a pupil's experience in the school with the Head of Year following throughout the key stage. Specialist Form Teachers, Heads of Year and Heads of School are assigned to each Year group.

The Head of Year, supported by the Form Teachers, is responsible for coordinating and liaising effectively with teachers, parents/guardians and others to support the learning and development of each pupil in a year group.

It is the role of the SENCo and the SEN team to ensure that any special educational needs are identified and met and that additional support is provided as appropriate.

The Head of Careers ensures that pupils are provided with up to date and relevant careers education information advice and guidance and liaises effectively with Heads of Year and their teams delivering careers related topics through the Learning for Life and Work programme.

Members of the pastoral team liaise with external agencies to avail of expertise when delivering the pastoral programme through school assemblies, workshops and presentations, one-to-one interviews and counselling, residential experiences, visits, and competitions.

6. Safeguarding and Child Protection

The school recognises its statutory duty to contribute to the safeguarding of the pupils in its care and its Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy clearly identifies the welfare of the child as being paramount. Responsibility in school for Child Protection rests with the Board of Governors but is delegated to the Designated Teacher for Child Protection, assisted by a Deputy Designated Teacher. Training in Safeguarding and Child Protection for all staff, both teaching and nonteaching, takes place every two years (with updates every year) and staff are trained to recognise signs of abuse as well as how to respond when there is a Child Protection concern.

The school works in co-operation with external agencies when child abuse is suspected. The school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy includes a Code of Conduct for Staff which outlines clearly the expectations of staff regarding their contact with pupils. The School Diary includes a list of agencies addressing a range of issues, whom pupils can contact for support.

7. Personal Development

The school encourages pupils to take responsibility for their own safety and wellbeing and seeks to help them to develop the skills to be able to do this. Aspects of personal development are addressed throughout the curriculum, most notably in Learning for Life and Work and Religious Studies. Assemblies regularly address issues surrounding making wise life choices, and the School's Wellbeing Committee works to raise awareness of healthy lifestyles. The school also encourages pupils to avail of some of the many extra-curricular activities available as a way to develop life skills.

8. Transition and Induction

Much effort is made to ensure a smooth transition to the school. All new pupils will have an initial meeting with the Head of School, Vice Principal or Principal. Information on Medical and Special Educational Needs will be forwarded to the Matron and SENCo respectively, who again will follow up as necessary.

Consideration will be given to the provision of some policy documents for parents in the home language, and where necessary, the School will liaise with the Education Authority NI to provide translators for induction or progress meetings with parents. All parents of new Year 8 pupils will be invited for an Information Evening to aid transition.

Related policies

The school maintains a range of policies designed to support the pastoral care of pupils.

They are:

- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Code of Conduct for Staff
- Child Protection Complaints Procedure
- Acceptable Use Policy for ICT
- Critical Incident Policy
- Curriculum Policy
- Drugs Policy
- E-safety Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Positive Behaviour Policy
- Relationships and Sexuality Education Policy
- Special Educational Needs Policy
- Management of Medical Conditions

6. Review and Evaluation

This policy will be reviewed at least once every two years by the Board of Governors. The policy will be kept under review by senior members of staff who will keep Governors informed of any difficulties that may arise.