



PASTORAL CARE POLICY

INTRODUCTION

The pastoral care of the individual child is of paramount importance in Railway Street Nursery School. We aim to work in partnership with parents to ensure that the pastoral needs of each individual child are met from the moment s/he begins school. The ethos, or the distinctive character of a school, reflects the extent to which the school promotes the moral, intellectual, personal and social development of its pupils.

Pastoral Care is looking after the whole development of the child in a positive way. This enables children to cope more effectively with learning in school and to develop skills and attitudes, which enable them to understand themselves and help develop relationships with others.

Pastoral care covers a wide range of issues including health and safety, academic progress, discipline, behaviour, intimate care, etc. Railway Street Nursery School has a range of procedures and policies in place to ensure that your child is safe and happy while in our care.

This policy is based on the following principles:-

- Childhood is a state of life to be enjoyed in its own right.
- Children learn and develop skills through play.
- Children have individual differences and needs, which must be recognised and met.
- Children's understanding comes slowly – constant repetition and variety of experiences aid understanding.
- Children need encouragement and help to learn how to learn.

BEGINNING NURSERY

A Parents' Information meeting is held in June, prior to the children beginning Nursery. Each parent is issued with a copy of our "Welcome Booklet" and the Principal explains the procedures for beginning school. Parents are given an opportunity to ask questions or raise any concerns they might have.

Children and parents are given an opportunity to attend Nursery for a visit in June and for a short period as part of their nursery induction in late August/early September (depending on how the school year calendar falls). This gives children the opportunity to familiarise themselves with our nursery setting and also to meet the staff whilst in the company of their parent.

For many children, Nursery is the first important entry to a social setting other than that of their family homes.

The UN Convention on the 'Rights of the Child, 1991', states that 'education should help children to fully develop their skills and personality'. At Railway Street Nursery School, each child will be given opportunities to:

- Settle smoothly into the new environment.
- Bridge the gap between home and school.
- Grow in self-confidence and self-esteem and thus develop a good self-image.
- Develop at his/her own rate through challenging and progressive play.
- Communicate with his/her peers and adults.
- Deepen and lengthen his/her concentration.

- Choose and explore a wide variety of material, which helps him/her to express himself/herself emotionally and creatively.
- Acquire good habits of health and hygiene.
- Learn to enjoy the rhythm of rhymes and songs and share in the wonder of books.
- Transfer smoothly to the next stage of his/her education.

The teaching staff have devised a holistic Approach to the delivery of the Pre-school Curriculum.

SAFEGUARDING & CHILD PROTECTION

**'The welfare of the child must be the paramount consideration'.
(The Children (Northern Ireland Order) 1995)**

All teaching and assistant staff have Access Northern Ireland Disclosure clearance and are trained and receive regular updates of all Safeguarding and Child Protection procedures DENI guidance and requirements in line with requirements.

Designated Teacher for child protection is Mrs Morrow

Deputy Designated Teacher for child protection is Mrs L Williamson

If parents have any concerns regarding child protection they should refer to the flow chart which can be found at the end of this document.

HOME / SCHOOL CONTACTS

The staff of Railway Street Nursery School recognises that the child's first educator is his/her parent. We regard parents as partners and endeavour to make them feel welcome in the Nursery. We actively encourage parents to participate in the life and work of our school.

Formal interviews are held throughout the year, when teachers meet with parents to discuss children's progress.

There will be early intervention when a problem is affecting the welfare or progress of a child. Co-operation and openness will be of paramount importance in the relationship between parents/ carers and staff

Regular contact with parents is maintained through our daily entry/dismissal procedures, the distribution of monthly newsletters, weekly updates that are posted on the Parents' Notice Board , via our text messaging service or the Seesaw app.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

The safety and welfare of the children in our care is of paramount importance. We have accident and injury procedures and policies in place. If your child sustains a serious injury while at school we will adhere to these policies. All accidents are recorded.

We encourage children to eat healthily and the choice of foods served at our snack meet the requirements of the Food Standards Agency (www.food.gov.uk). The children are given a choice of milk or water at snack and lunchtime.

ATTENDANCE

Good attendance is vital if children are to gain the maximum benefit from their Nursery school experience. However, children should not be sent to school when they are ill, even if they insist they want to come. If your child cannot attend school for any reason, please contact us from 8:45am – 9:00am. Please inform us if your child has a medical condition that is contagious e.g. chicken pox.

DISCIPLINE

In Railway Street Nursery School, we aim to create a climate which will promote positive behaviour, encourage self-discipline and respect for others and their surroundings, build self-esteem and develop children's independence. Railway Street Nursery School also operates an Anti-Bullying Policy. Full copies of our Discipline, Anti-Bullying and Behaviour Management Policies are distributed to parents when children start Nursery. These policies are in line with guidelines issued in 'Pastoral Care in Schools: *Promoting Positive Behaviour, (2001)*'. Parents who are concerned that their child is being bullied should follow the advice set out in these documents.

PASTORAL CARE PROGRAMME

The UN Convention, (1991) on the 'Rights of the Child', states that, education should teach children '*about their own and other people's rights, values and cultural identity and prepare them for adult life*'.

Through the course of the year, during Circle Time sessions, staff focus on raising children's awareness with regard to caring for ourselves, each other and our environment. A variety of issues such as: sharing, friendship, feelings, road safety, stranger danger, etc. will be explained with children and discussed.

INTIMATE CARE

Arrangements for changing children are outlined in our Intimate Care Policy. Copies of this policy are distributed to parents when children start Nursery.

MEDIA

The children are regularly photographed and recorded by Nursery staff within school and on outings and trips. The photographs are used for observation assessment purposes and also for school displays within the nursery.

Photographs are available for viewing on the school website or on seesaw and some will be issued to parents as a hard copy at the end of the year. As children are often photographed engaged in interactive play alongside others, we cannot guarantee that a photograph of your child will not be included in another child's photograph (Staff make great efforts to minimise issuing group photographs). On occasions, photographs are also sent to the local papers. Slide shows of still or movie pictures are often played on the monitor screen in the Hallway via the I-pad.

Parental permission is sought if photos are to be taken by anyone else, for example, the school photographer or local newspaper photographer.

There is a Christmas video and Graduation video recorded by a local videographer, who has been vetted by Access N.I. Parental permission is sought for their child's inclusion in these videos. Parents receive the video via a link sent through seesaw. The link is for viewing purposes only.

Parents who do not give their permission for their child to be photographed/recorded as described above must make their concerns to the Principal in writing and the Principal will act accordingly.

RECORDS

The following records are kept

- Information provided by parents e.g. questionnaires, contact details, medical information
- Relevant observations on a child's all round development will be made and noted accordingly
- Information provided by outside agencies when available

We will process your personal information on the legal basis that it is part of our **legal obligation** as a school and is in the **vital interest** of our pupils to do so. We will share the personal information you provide to us with certain third parties [please refer to 'Privacy Notice: Pupils & Families' in the policy file) for a list of third parties with whom we share personal data and for reasons why this is necessary].

SCHOOL / COMMUNITY LINKS

In Railway Street Nursery School, we recognise the importance of developing strong links with members of the community; other local Nursery Schools, local Primary Schools and other agencies which contribute positively to the children's welfare and education. We welcome visitors from various working backgrounds which match our "People Who Help Us" themes. On occasions, we also take the children on visits to places in our local community.

The staff of Railway Street Nursery School are committed to meeting the pastoral needs of your child. We seek to work in partnership with parents and the wider community to achieve this aim. We want our school to be a happy place where your child will feel secure and valued. If you would like any further information on our pastoral care arrangements, please contact the Principal.

MONITORING AND REVIEWING THE POLICY

All teaching and nursery assistant staff and parents will be involved in reviewing our Pastoral Care Policy on a yearly basis.

Ratified by Board of Governors

Chairperson: Mrs K. Gilpin-Brown

Date: March 2025

