



Pastoral Care Policy

(Whole school from Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) to Sixth Form)

Policy Aims

Pastoral care is the name given to a school's commitment to improving and developing the wellbeing of its pupils. This is achieved by creating a school environment that is inclusive, friendly and pupil focused. Plans and provisions are put in place which consider and include the emotional, physical, social, and intellectual needs of every child so that the school caters for everyone's wellbeing. Mental health is a state of wellbeing in which every individual realises their own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to contribute to their community.

Gosfield School is committed to providing effective pastoral care and encouraging wellbeing by supporting and developing the whole persona of the child, fostering good relations between staff and pupils and between pupils themselves and maintaining a School community which is inclusive and teaches service to others. Gosfield School has an important role to play, acting as a source of support and information for pupils, parents and staff.

Scope

This policy sets out the School's approach to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing, as well as effective pastoral care, and is designed to help staff to identify and support pupils in need of help, and to follow appropriate referral procedures. This policy applies to the whole school from Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) to Sixth Form.

Objectives

This policy aims to:

- Provide an atmosphere where every pupil can achieve their maximum potential
- Recognise that pupils will achieve their best academically if they feel secure, positive and valued
- Educate pupils to be responsible and productive citizens of their wider communities
- Value pupils as individuals beyond their examination results
- Encourage pupil wellbeing and resilience through initiatives and practices
- Promote positive mental health in all staff and pupils

This policy gives due regard to the following: Keeping Children Safe in Education annual updates and should be read alongside the school Safeguarding Policy.

Responsibilities

The Head of Prep School and the Assistant Principal Pastoral oversee the provision of pastoral care in the Prep School and the Senior School respectively. The Vice Principal leads the Heads of Section

who also have a role in the pastoral care, behaviour management and attainment. The Head of Sixth Form and the tutors are responsible for pastoral care in the Sixth Form, all staff and tutors, class teachers are involved in the pastoral care of pupils and receive mandatory safeguarding training, so they are equipped to identify, refer when required and provide appropriate pastoral care.

The form tutor/class teacher is responsible for each pupil's overall welfare. They are the first point of contact for parents building positive relationships with both the pupil and parents to strengthen the provision of pastoral care and support. The Principal First Aider, Pastoral Assistant, and Special Educational Needs Coordinator play an active role in providing pastoral care when required and work closely with staff and parents/guardians.

All School staff are responsible for fostering a culture at the school which encourages pupils to openly discuss any issues, including any mental health and wellbeing issues. Any member of staff who is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of a pupil or feels a pupil is at risk of immediate harm then the usual child protection procedures should be followed. Mrs Gwynne is the DSL and should be informed, or staff can refer through the MyConcern platform. If the pupil presents a medical emergency, then the usual procedures for medical emergencies should be followed.

Pastoral Arrangements

The role of the tutor is very important in dealing with day-to-day issues and monitoring pupils' progress both academically and socially.

In the Prep School, the Class Teacher is the first port of call for parents and are available throughout the day and on parents' evenings, if an issue is escalated this may be referred to Deputy Head of Prep or Head of Prep and may require further meetings to address individual concerns.

The Senior School is divided into three sections:

Lower (Years 7 to 9)

Upper (Years 10 and 11)

Sixth Form (Years 12 and 13)

The Form Tutor is the first port of call for parent contact regarding their child; they will develop positive relationships between school and home and look to support in all aspects of personal development. The Heads of Section communicate with parents on many issues if referred by the tutor, a combination of strategies may be used to support pupils and the SENCo is also available where specific needs require attention or access arrangements need to be put in place.

In the Prep School, and the Senior School we have a Pastoral Assistant who will deal with behaviour issues, friendship fluctuations and mental wellbeing support, in all sections of the school pupils have access to the Principal First Aiders to deal with medical issues.

Knowing Every child

Knowing the individual in the Prep School

The Class Teachers teach their class for most lessons and therefore get to know the pupils well and see them in different contexts. We provide specialist teaching across a broad range of subjects. Frequent interaction with staff in a variety of contexts enables the early identification of subtle changes in behaviour or attitudes, supporting the wellbeing, safeguarding, and pastoral care of all pupils. At the end of the summer term, transition meetings take place, this is essential for Year 6 transitioning both for current pupils and external pupils joining the school.

Knowing the individual in the Senior School

Form tutors play a central role in the pastoral care of pupils within the senior school. As the primary point of contact for pupils and their families, they develop positive relationships that enable them to monitor wellbeing, attendance, academic progress, and social development. Through regular daily contact, form tutors are well placed to identify emerging concerns, recognise changes in behaviour or attitudes, and provide timely support and guidance where needed. They work closely with subject teachers, pastoral leaders, and parents to ensure that each pupil feels valued, supported, and able to thrive both academically and personally within the school community.

Tutors register their group every morning and for longer tutor periods on Mondays. Tutors play an important role in guiding pupils' participation in co-curricular activities and encouraging a broad range of experiences beyond the classroom. They promote community service, including involvement in charity initiatives, pupil voice opportunities, leadership roles, and wider school events, helping pupils to develop confidence, and responsibility. Through this support, tutors encourage pupils to engage fully in school life and develop key personal and social skills.

Communication with Parents

There are many opportunities throughout the school year for parents and carers to meet with their child's class teacher, tutor, and other members of staff. These include open days, parents' evenings, school events, and transition meetings. Parents and carers are also welcome to contact staff via email with any questions or concerns. We aim to respond to all enquiries within 24 hours during the working week.

Welcome evenings are arranged for parents when their child joins Year 7, this is an opportunity for parents to meet the tutor and key staff, this is part of the transition process. Yr 12 also have a bespoke transition day for those joining the 6th form, the Head of 6th Form and tutors.

The importance of the school / home partnership is emphasised, and parents are encouraged to contact the school if they have any concerns about their child's welfare or progress. Parents receive a report on their child's progress once each term, written subject and tutorial reports, grade cards, or at parents' evening. Pupils have a review with their tutor to reflect on successes and consider targets for improvement; there are further meetings with members of the senior leadership team and section leaders that are integral to this process.

Targets and action plans are written down and carried forward to the next year for review. The emphasis in the Senior School is on self-appraisal thus encouraging pupils to take responsibility for their own learning and development. In Years 7 to 13 pupils attend parents' evenings with their parents to encourage pupils to take responsibility for their performance and progress.

Continuity of Care in the Prep School

In the Prep School handover meetings are held when a class teacher changes roles or year groups. Key staff discuss any SEN and pastoral / safeguarding information. The Head of Lower meets with the Year 6 class teacher and Head of Prep including the Assistant Principal Pastoral (DSL) and the Pastoral Assistants to ensure the continuity of care as they transition into the senior school. Key information about all pupils is held on Bromcom our MIS system. At the beginning of each new academic year all the teachers/ staff receive safeguarding training and updates, key information regarding SEN, medical and wellbeing and pastoral issues are also shared.

Continuity of Care in the Senior School

When pupils move from Lower to Upper and Uppers to 6th Form, the Section Heads and tutors meet to pass on relevant information about individuals, all information is held in Bromcom. Tutors write feedback on pupils with the full academic report at points in the academic year, this references the participation of tutees in the school community, the breadth of co-curricular engagement and personal growth. The Assistant Principal Pastoral has the overview of the pastoral care for meets with the Pastoral Assistant and Heads of Section as required.

The role of the Principal First Aider

The Principal First Aider is available during school hours and is supported by First Aid trained staff. The role of the Principal First Aider is to be attentive to any medical needs, accidents and administration of prescribed medicines (see Administration of Medicines Policy). On occasions where there are physical symptoms e.g. loss of weight or self-harming, the Principal First Aider will refer to the pastoral team or enter details on MyConcern our Safeguarding MIS, this will be followed up by the DSL – Mrs Amanda Gwynne. If a parent does not inform us of a child's medical condition or fails to provide medicine which is required, this will be referred to the DSL as it may highlight a safeguarding concern.

Staff are made aware of the warning signs through training and will discuss any concerns they have with the Principal First Aider or DSL. Wherever possible conversations between pupils and the Principal First Aider, Healthcare Professionals and external Counsellors remain confidential but confidentiality cannot be guaranteed if there are fears for a pupil's safety (see Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy). In the case of serious mental or physical issues the School will work with parents to seek appropriate support from external agencies. If there are fears that a pupil's medical condition does not allow them to safely access the School curriculum, extra-curricular activities or educational visits, guidance from an appropriate professional body would be sought, this can be accessed through Family Help.

Individual Care Plans

An Individual Care Plan (ICP) will be drawn up for pupils who are in receipt of a formal diagnosis from a suitably qualified professional pertaining to their mental health, this would be monitored in school by the relevant Head of Section, or Head of Prep. This should be drawn up involving the pastoral team, the pupil, the parents and relevant health professionals.

This might include:

- Brief details of a pupil's condition or concern
- Special requirements and precautions
- Medication and any side effects
- What to do, and who to contact in an emergency
- The role the School can play
- Guidance for classroom teachers and other staff

Information from the ICP will be shared with the relevant teaching staff to provide the appropriate level of support for the pupils. The Principal First Aider will agree an enhanced care plan that may include confidential information. The ICP will be reviewed and updated at regular intervals, agreed with the pupils and their parents or guardians.

Mental Health and the Curriculum

The skills, knowledge and understanding needed by pupils to keep themselves and others physically and mentally healthy and safe are included as part of the PSHEE curriculum, talks by visiting speakers and awareness assemblies support pupils in making positive choices. Other areas of the curriculum also teach content around being mentally and physically healthy, the co-curricular also supports an active and healthy lifestyle.

Warning Signs

Staff may become aware of warning signs which indicate a pupil is experiencing mental health or emotional wellbeing issues. These warning signs should always be taken seriously and staff observing any of these warning signs should communicate their concerns with the relevant Pastoral Staff or DSL. Staff can report on the MyConcern safeguarding platform that is used in school or if it is considered urgent staff can report directly to the DSL directly who will follow up on any concerns.

Possible warning signs include:

- Physical signs of harm that are repeated or appear non-accidental
- Changes in eating or sleeping habits
- Increased isolation from friends or family, becoming socially withdrawn
- Changes in activity and mood
- Lowering of academic achievement
- Talking or joking about self-harm or suicide
- Abusing drugs or alcohol
- Expressing feelings of failure, uselessness or loss of hope
- Changes in clothing – e.g. long sleeves in warm weather
- Secretive behaviour
- Skipping PE or getting changed secretly
- Lateness to or absence from School
- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause
- An increase in lateness or absenteeism
- Challenging behaviour such as stealing or bullying

Disclosures

- A pupil may choose to disclose concerns about themselves or a friend to any member of staff, meaning that all staff need to know how to respond appropriately to a disclosure.
- If a pupil chooses to disclose concerns about their own mental health or that of a friend to a member of staff, the member of staff's response should always be calm, supportive and non-judgemental in line with the School's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. Staff should always tell the pupil that they are unable to keep information shared confidential (see below).
- Staff should listen rather than advise and our first thoughts should be of the pupil's emotional and physical safety rather than of exploring 'Why?'
- All disclosures should be recorded in writing using MyConcern.
- This written record should include:
 - Pupil Name and Date
 - The name of the member of staff to whom the disclosure was made
 - Main points from the conversation

- Agreed next steps

This information should be shared with the DSL or deputy DSL in her absence. The staff member should expect a response from the DSL confirming the matter has been addressed.

Confidentiality and information sharing

It is important to be honest about the issue of confidentiality. Tell the pupil upfront that it may be necessary to pass concerns on, then discuss with the pupil:

- Who we are going to talk to
- What we are going to tell them
- Why we need to tell them

In certain situations, it may be necessary to seek advice from external services to proceed, it may not be possible to engage with the parents before referring to the services or following the advice if it places the child in immediate risk of harm.

Absence from School

If a pupil is absent from School for any length of time, then appropriate arrangements will be made, setting work online through Microsoft Teams allows pupils to continue with their learning. Should a pupil be receiving treatment and be in hospital for a prolonged period the school will be in discussion with parents and any medical professionals to assess appropriate provision.

If the School considers that the presence of a pupil in School is having a detrimental effect on the wellbeing and safety of other members of the School community or that a pupil's mental health concern cannot be managed effectively and safely within the School, the Principal reserves the right to request that parents withdraw their child temporarily until appropriate reassurances have been made. Often this will require working with medical / psychological professionals.

Girls on Board

The School adopts the Girls on Board programme to support with friendship issues. It empowers girls in school to navigate the choppy waters of friendships for themselves. All girls in Year 7 receive Girls on Board training, this is delivered by the Head of Loweres and the Pastoral staff, it allows girls to understand the complex issues that occur and helps them to understand where they may fit within the dynamics and therefore be able to adapt their social interactions. Reactive sessions are called as and when is necessary. Parents are introduced to Girls on Board through the resources provided and encouraged to read Andrew Hampton's book 'When Girls Fall Out.' Parent webinars, including Girls on Board, take place throughout the year.

Training

All staff should be made aware of this policy and how to deal with suspected mental health problems in pupils.

All staff will receive regular training about recognising and responding to mental health issues as part of their regular child protection training to enable them to keep pupils safe.

Training opportunities for staff who require more in-depth knowledge will be provided throughout the year.

Monitoring and review

The Principal and the Governors will regularly monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of this policy.

The Assistant Principal (Pastoral), Head of Prep School together with relevant School staff, e.g. Heads of Section Heads, Pastoral Assistants and the Principal First Aider, will regularly monitor and review mental health, wellbeing and pastoral issues in order to support individuals and to identify trends, issues of concerns and the operation of this policy.

This policy will be subject to review at least every two years (or more frequently if changes to legislation, regulation or statutory guidance so require) by the Assistant Principal Pastoral and Head of Prep School, and the board of Governors.

Further information

Anxiety UK: <https://www.anxietyuk.org.uk/>

Prevention of young suicide UK – PAPYRUS: <https://www.papyrus-uk.org/>

ChildLine: <https://www.childline.org.uk/> or Call 0800 1111

NSPCC - <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/>

Childnet – online Safety tips and advice: <https://www.childnet.com/>

YOUNGMINDS: Help with drug or alcohol related dependency:
<https://www.youngminds.org.uk/parent/parents-a-z-mental-health-guide/drugs-and-alcohol/>

GAMCARE - Support for gambling addiction: <https://www.gamcare.org.uk/get-support/children-and-young-people/>

Support for children who are being bullied - NSPCC: <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/advice-for-families/dealing-with-bullying/>

Harmful Content Online: <https://reportharmfulcontent.com/child/>

Mental Health Support: <https://www.place2be.org.uk/>

Signed _____

Principal

Date _____

11/9/26

Date of next review: September 2027

