

Pastoral Care Policy

The hallmarks of an Edmund Rice school are care, especially for those who are vulnerable or disadvantaged in any way, and action for social and ecological justice..... (ERST Charter)

Coláiste Éanna seeks to be a centre of excellence in the provision of care to all members of the school community. It seeks to develop and implement an effective Pastoral Care Programme to promote the personal, social, spiritual, moral, educational and vocational needs of all but especially to the vulnerable and disadvantaged.

This desire is inspired by the Gospel of Jesus Christ:

*Jesus said to his disciples:
'As the Father has loved me,
so I have loved you. Remain in my love.
If you keep my commandments
you will remain in my love,
just as I have kept my Father's commandments
and remain in his love.
I have told you this
so that my own joy may be in you
and your joy be complete.
This is my commandment:
love one another,
as I loved you.'
John 15: 9-12*

Coláiste Éanna recognises:

the uniqueness of each individual. It identifies the educational needs of each pupil and puts in place appropriate resources, curricula, programmes and methodologies to enable everyone to achieve his full potential. Gifted children and children with learning difficulties in a particular subject are supported,, while pupils with special educational needs are welcomed and provided with special assistance as is practicable. There is a breadth and balance in the curriculum, while an extensive range of extra-curricular activities encourages participation and positive relationships, a healthy lifestyle and the holistic development of the person.

ERST Charter, p17

Pastoral Care is an approach to education which endeavours to value and develop each member of the school community. It promotes learning at every level.

This Pastoral Care Policy seeks to respect and nurture the quality of all relationships. It promotes effective and caring leadership and partnership in the school community. It influences all aspects of the life of the school, in particular policies, curriculum, roles and structures in order to sustain and enrich the educational experience of each student.

This Pastoral Care Policy is aware of and is informed by the legislative requirements of:
The Education Act (1998)
The Education Welfare Act (2000)
The Equal Status Act (2000)

This Pastoral Care Policy is part of the Coláiste Éanna Whole School Development Planning and intersects, links and overlaps with elements of the SPHE, RE, Anti-bullying, Code of Behaviour, Substance Abuse, Child Protection, Relationships and Sexuality Education Policies.

Core principles of Pastoral Care in Coláiste Éanna

- All pupils in Coláiste Éanna have right to be treated with sensitivity and respect.
- Each pupil is entitled to dignity and respect and this demands that any personal information be treated with confidentiality (within the norms established by Child Protection, civil and criminal law).
- Each pupil has a right to maintain his privacy but it also recognises the rights of the parent of a minor and their right to be informed of intervention by the Pastoral Care team.

Pupils who are considered to be in need of Pastoral Care

- All pupils
- Pupils who experience a traumatic or tragic event
- Pupils with specific learning difficulties
- Pupils with specific behavioural issues
- Pupils who experience poor health
- People who experience difficult family relationships
- Pupils who experience difficult financial circumstances.

Those responsible for Pastoral Care

All members of the school community are responsible for the care of others, not least the pupils themselves and all teaching and other staff. The Principal has ultimate responsibility for Pastoral Care however the Principal delegates this to certain staff members who are charged with special responsibility in this area:

- The Deputy Principal
- School Guidance Counsellor
- Anti-bullying Team
- Learning Support Team
- Class Tutors
- Year Heads
- Special Needs Assistants
- Social Personal Health Education Dept.
- Religious Education Dept.
- PE and Sports Department.

The Principal and/or Deputy Principal

The Principal and/or Deputy Principal oversees and facilitates the Pastoral Care Programme.

Pupils in need will be identified by a Psychologists Report through the means of an Psycho-Educational Assessment; by the Guidance Counsellor; by the Principal as advised by members of the teaching staff.

The Career Guidance Counsellor.

Counselling is a key part of the school guidance programme, offered on an individual or group basis here in Coláiste Éanna as part of a developmental learning or group process and at times of personal crisis. At this school, counselling is understood to have as its objectives the empowerment of students so that they can make decisions, solve problems, address behavioural issues, develop coping strategies and resolve any difficulties they may be experiencing. Counselling in this school may include: personal counselling, educational counselling, career counselling or any combination of these. On occasion referral is deemed to be the most suitable course of action.

(Coláiste Éanna Guidance Counselling Plan)

All this is in parallel to but often in conjunction with his/ her role offering Careers Guidance.

The Anti-Bullying Team

The Anti-Bullying Team, led by the Anti-bullying Co-ordinator, has a critical role in i) creating awareness about bullying, that is, to help all pupils to recognise, to reject and to report bullying and ii) to investigate incidents of bullying and follow through with this.

The Anti-bullying team aims to develop an ethos of openness and peer support among our students.

Learning Support Team.

The Learning Support Team, led by the Learning Support Co-ordinator, offers learning support to individuals (or small groups of pupils as appropriate) in areas where pupils have a particular need which have been identified by a Psycho educational Report, the Guidance

Counsellor or the Principal as advised by teachers. These needs may be in the academic or life-skills areas.

Class Tutors.

See below

Year Heads

Each year group has a Year Head. The Year Head appointed to First Year continues to act as Year Head to this group in subsequent years (with the exception of Transition Year). The Year Head has a unique and special role in Pastoral Care as he/ she is in daily communication with his/ her year group and on occasion with parents. Issues of discipline, punctuality, studies are dealt with by the Year Head. In this way the Year Head becomes very familiar with pupils and may very quickly identify vulnerable pupils.

Special Needs Assistants

Special Needs Assistants, under the supervision of the class room teacher, helping pupils with a wide range of severe learning, physical or behavioural difficulties to achieve their learning goals. Special Needs Assistants are also assigned duties by the Principal that facilitate the smooth running of the school. In this way Special Needs Assistants have a very unique role to play in Pastoral Care through observation and access to a wide range of schools activities. This is also through of other key ancillary staff, such as Caretaker, Bursar and School Secretary.

SPHE Dept.

See below

Religious Education Dept.

See below.

The Pastoral Care Team

The Team shall consist of:

- The Principal
- The Deputy Principal
- The Guidance Counsellor
- Learning Support co-ordinator/ Anti-bullying Co-ordinator
- SPHE co-ordinator

This team will meet at regular intervals and review the implementation of the Pastoral Care Programme and the specific needs of an individual. These review meetings may also be attended by the relevant Year Heads and class tutors from time to time. The Pastoral Care Team will draw the resources within the schools and ask staff who have professional training or particular skills to work with a pupil in need.

These review meetings will have minutes kept, bearing in mind the right to confidentiality of a pupil.

The review meeting will be cognisant of the fact that there may be a spectrum of Pastoral Care needs, some which, for some pupils may be seemingly permanent and for some pupils which may appear seemingly temporary.

A central responsibility of the Pastoral Care Team will be to communicate appropriate information to parents, appropriate teachers and staff, in an appropriate way.

The Pastoral Care team will set up evaluation and monitoring procedures which will attempt to gauge the success and effectiveness of the Pastoral Care Policy.

The Pastoral Care Team implements the 'Critical Incident Plan' of Coláiste Éanna as the need arises.

Communications.

Verbal communication to teachers/ staff is considered the optimum method of communication.

It may however be appropriate for some forms of information be posted on a staffroom notice board or to be sent by e mail.

Personal meetings with parents are considered to be the optimum method of communication; however phone conversations and mail may also be appropriate.

Pastoral Care and the curriculum in Coláiste Éanna as delivered within the timetable

The tutor system.

Each pupil in Coláiste Éanna is assigned a class tutor.

Tutors meet with their class tutor group four times a week for 10 minutes each day (except Wednesday) at 10.45am. Each class, from first to sixth year has a tutor.

Pastoral Care is the only concern of the class tutor. The tutor acts as an observer, advisor and mentor. The tutor acts as a conduit of information.

He/ she does not have a discipline role within the tutor class, however he/she may discuss discipline issues with a pupil in as far as they are affecting a pupils experience of school and advise as to how discipline issues may be resolved.

Each class tutor creates and delivers his/her own tutor class content on advice from the Year Head.

The tutor liaises with the relevant year head in the first instance but may consult directly with any member of the Pastoral Care Team.

Social Personal Health Education

The Education Act (1998) emphasises that schools should promote the social and personal development of students and provide health education for them.

Each class, from first to third year has SPHE, one period per week. TY has a double period of SPHE.

These classes follow the syllabus set out by the NCCA and covers the following modules: (from: SPHE website)

Belonging and Integrating

Developing and enhancing group skills and communication skills. Learning to plan personal and group goals and targets. Examining the dynamics of family relationships and understanding individual responsibilities as a member of the school community. Identifying consequences and types of loss. Recognising bullying and being aware of school policy. Identifying staff for help.

Self-management: A sense of purpose

Communication Skills

Physical Health

Friendships

Relationships and Sexuality

Emotional Health

Influences and Decisions

Substance Use

Personal Safety

Each class group takes part in Health Awareness Week in November.

Central to this week are outside speakers on the following topics (in 2011)

Sixth Year: Sexually Transmitted Infections

Fifth Year: Alcohol and alcoholism

Transition Year: Cancer and dealing with cancer

Third Year: Smoking and its effects

Second Year: Mental Health

First Year: Mental Health.

Religious Education

All classes in Coláiste Éanna receive Religious Education which focuses on one of the five elements in the Edmund Rice Charter:

Nurturing Faith, Christian Spirituality and Gospel-based values.

Whereby:

*Edmund Rice Schools in partnership with the home and the parish are dedicated
To providing and developing a Catholic education that cultivates a living faith, fosters
Christian spirituality, and educates people in Gospel-based values*

ERST Charter p11

Junior Cycle classes have RE two periods a week and follow the NCCA Religious Studies syllabus, however they do not sit the Junior Certificate Exam set out by the SEC.

First Years re classes have one off-campus retreat

TY, 5th and 6th Years following a syllabus created within the RE Department but based on the NCCA Religious Studies syllabus, this is not examined by the SEC in Leaving Certificate.

Transition Year have 2 Periods a week. The syllabus followed is that set out under the *Faith Connect* Online RE Programme.

TY have a full day off campus retreat.

Fifth Year have 3 Periods of RE a week and follow the Religious Studies syllabus set by the NCCA. Fifth Years focus on *The Search for Meaning* and *The Moral Questions* modules.

Sixth Years have 3 periods of RE a week. Sixth Years cover a wide range of issues following on from the Fifth Year Programme but also including *Relationship and Sexuality Education*, discussion on family, social and justice issues.

Request for financial assistance.

Coláiste Éanna cannot give direct financial assistance to pupils in financial need, however it will provide, as far as is practicable, books and other materials if requested.

Informal Pastoral Care

Pastoral Care takes place in an informal way in the myriad conversations and interactions that occur between pupils and staff in the context of the formal or extra-curricular activities and the quality of this Care is often augmented by the relationships between teachers and their pupils.

This Pastoral Care Policy was adopted by the Board of Management on: _____

Signed: _____
Chairperson of the Board

Signed _____
Principal

Date: _____