

## **PASTORAL CARE POLICY including EYFS DURHAM HIGH SCHOOL**

*This policy should be read in conjunction with: Anti-bullying Policy; Behaviour Policy; Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy; Missing Pupil Procedures; SEND Policy.*

### **Pastoral Care Aims**

All our pastoral work aspires to reflect the aims of Durham High School, which are to:

- Be a friendly, caring community based on Christian principles where every individual is valued.
- Develop the potential of every girl.
- Encourage academic excellence and a lifelong love of learning.

Pastoral Care is at the heart of everything we do. Our uniqueness comes from basing what we do on strong Christian values and a family ethos pervades throughout the School. In the spirit of *Every Child Matters* our Pastoral Care aims to make our pupils: be healthy, stay safe, enjoy and achieve, make a positive contribution and achieve economic wellbeing, offering a holistic approach to addressing the needs of every pupil.

We are firmly committed to the ideal that pupils who are happy and settled are most able to achieve their true potential. Therefore, the primary aim of our Pastoral Care is, as far as possible, to ensure that each individual pupil feels valued, cared for and supported throughout her time at DHS by nurturing self-confidence, building self-esteem and emotional resilience, and giving each individual a sense of well-being so she can be happy and feel comfortable with herself. We also aim to give each pupil opportunities to develop the social, spiritual and moral resources she needs to cope with the demands of life in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

Pastoral Care plays a major part in the Safeguarding of our pupils and is the responsibility of all, not merely the remit of the Form Teacher; every member of the School community plays an important part in this process. Nevertheless, the role of the Form Teacher is considered essential to achieving the key aims of the School and the priority of every Form Teacher is the Pastoral Care of the pupils in their care.

We consider that the partnership with parents is also crucial to the success of our Pastoral Care and we always aim to work together with parents to support our pupils through their education and development.

### **Pastoral Care within School**

We encourage pupils to recognise the importance of the role they play in cultivating a caring community by supporting one another and being reliable, loyal and caring friends. We expect pupils to look out for each other and offer support and help when needed. As in any school, friendships do not always run smoothly and when issues do arise we endeavour to support pupils in helping themselves to sort out issues, as far as possible with the aim of reconciling differences.

As pupils move through the School, there are more formal opportunities to offer pupil-on-pupil support; as a mentor to younger pupils including academic and pastoral buddies, a Form Rep, a House Captain or as part of the Sixth Form Senior Leadership Team who play an important role in both Junior House and Senior House. Pupils work together on charity events, have assemblies together (in both Key Stage assemblies and whole School assemblies with Junior House and Senior House meeting separately), enjoy joint social activities and much more. From Reception, each pupil is allocated to a House (Booth, Heath, Neville or Tempest) where a range of activities, such as creative, musical and sporting events enable pupils to get to know one another across year groups.

As staff, we aim to model supportive professional relationships, and to encourage each pupil to adopt an individual, positive approach to learning and to make the most of her time here at the High School. We recognise that knowing and valuing each individual pupil is essential; knowing her parents and her family background, her strengths and weaknesses, her hopes and aspirations. This is a vital element of effective Pastoral Care.

By its very nature, Pastoral Care involves dealing with difficulties that inevitably arise from time to time. We recognise that excellent academic progress and effective Pastoral Care are intrinsically linked. Therefore, both academic and personal progress is monitored regularly by Heads of Year, to ensure that any problems are identified promptly. If problems do arise we aim to listen carefully to the pupils, to communicate quickly with parents and to manage problems sensitively.

We encourage pupils to let staff know about things that are concerning them or causing them to be unhappy. If pupils do not want to speak to a member of staff directly then in Junior House there is a 'Thoughts Box' for pupils to post comments or concerns that they may have about anything to do with School and these boxes are emptied by Senior staff. There are also active School Councils in both Junior House and Senior House which provide forums for pupils to voice opinions and concerns. In Senior House, Year Councils also provide a forum for the pupil voice. Feedback also comes through the Headmistress' annual questionnaire to pupils.

Through our assembly and PSHE programme we aim to develop emotional resilience by encouraging pupils to be mindful and to be able to deal with failure as well as academic success. We aim to build confidence and self-esteem through the use of praise and rewards as part of our assessment system. We strive to give pupils the confidence to think independently, analytically, logically, creatively and imaginatively and take on leadership roles within a School that provides a safe haven for pupils to develop these characteristics and grow into well-rounded adults, happy with and within themselves.

## **Pastoral Structure**

At Durham High School we pride ourselves on the fact that each pupil is known and knows that she is known.

The School's pastoral structure is a horizontal one based on year groups from Nursery to Year 13. The Form Class provides a framework for looking after each individual. The role of the Form Teacher is essential to the work of the School. All Form Teachers have the opportunity to get to know the girls in their Form very well. Whenever possible a Form Teacher will stay with a group from Y7 to Y11. In Sixth Form girls will have the same tutor for both Y12 and Y13 from the Sixth Form Tutor Team.

In Senior House, Deputy Form Teachers help by taking the register, and by sharing the responsibility of report reading and individual target setting, as directed by the Head of Year. Heads of Year rotate with their year groups for Years 8 and 9 and for Years 10 and 11 and this provides continuity of care.

In Junior House Form Teachers deliver most of the curriculum and in Senior House Key Stage 3 staff in non-setted subjects, usually teach their specialist subject to their Form. For Senior House teachers who teach in Junior House; any matter causing concern within lessons is immediately passed on to the Form Teacher. For all staff who teach in Senior House, any matter causing concern should be referred to the Form Teacher and Head of Year.

In Junior House, we foster a warm and caring environment so pupils can feel safe, secure and happy in their day-to-day work and play. Form Teachers deal with daily pastoral issues and pass more serious matters on to the Head of Junior House who has overall responsibility for the welfare of each pupil. If necessary, pastoral issues are brought to the attention of all staff in Junior House in Key Stage Meetings, JLT Meetings and whole staff meetings.

In Senior House, we continue to offer the care and guidance required for pupils to grow to become confident young women by developing an ethos of mutual respect and a community in which we all

look after one another by nurturing well-being and resilience through everything we do. Form Teachers run weekly Class Assemblies, and Form PSHE sessions allowing Form Teachers to really get to know their pupils well. A weekly programme of Year Group assemblies is organised by Heads of Year for their Year Groups and Year group activities and events play a major role in helping Form Teachers to bond with the pupils in their Form Class as well as the pupils to bond with one another within Forms and across year groups, for example, Welcome Days, Induction Days, Year group trips, and Careers related activities.

In Years 7 to 11 we have Heads of Year to whom Form Teachers report. There is a designated Head of Year 7 who works closely with Y6 internal and external girls to support their transition into Senior house. In addition there are specific Heads of year who work with Lower School (Y8/9), Middle School (Y10/11) and Sixth Form. The Head of Sixth Form oversees Years 12 and 13 and manages a team of Form Teachers. All Heads of Year report to and work closely and in conjunction with the Deputy Head (Pastoral). Pastoral issues are often shared with Senior House staff in staff briefings and staff meetings. Heads of Year work closely with the SENCO when required.

Senior House pastoral teams meet regularly to discuss pastoral issues. Heads of Year have half-termly meetings with their Form Teachers and Deputies and the Deputy Head (Pastoral) hold regular fortnightly meetings with Heads of Year. Heads of Year also work with the PSHE Co-ordinator to develop pastoral activities through the PSHE curriculum appropriate for their year group.

Form Teachers across the whole School meet the pupils in their form class in twice-daily registration and all Form Teachers are willing to be there for the pupils at other times during the School day if the pupils wish to speak to them. The Head of Junior House, Heads of Year and the Deputy Head (Pastoral) in Senior House operate an open door policy encouraging pupils to go to see them to discuss any problems or simply have a chat whenever they feel the need to do so. Senior House Heads of Year also create opportunities to meet informally with pupils to chat about issues and listen to pupils' concerns.

### **Chaplain**

The Chaplain, Reverend Vallis, is available to meet with pupils to listen and offer support. This support is open to pupils of any faith or none. Support is also available for family members and staff. Reverend Vallis leads the Christian worship that takes place within School and runs a regular programme of events for pupils and staff such as: Communion Services in School and a staff prayer group. In addition we give opportunity for parents and carers to attend Prayer Group Meetings. Reverend Vallis prepares assemblies for the whole School and for Forms to use that often have a pastoral theme to support pupils whatever their spirituality. The Chaplain's office is in the Hurworth Block.

### **School Counsellor**

Whilst pupils are free to talk to any member of staff if they have concerns, there is also the option of booking an appointment to talk in confidence to the School Counsellor. An appointment with the Counsellor can be made through the Deputy Head (Pastoral) for Senior House pupils and through the Head of Junior House for Junior House pupils. Parental consent is sought for all pupils under the age of 16. For pupils aged 16 or over, parental consent is usually sought but is not essential. All pupils have their first three half-hour counselling sessions paid for by the School; parents pay for sessions thereafter.