



Salesian Secondary College

Policy governing professional one to one engagement between adults and students.

Mission Statement.

The mission of the Salesian Secondary College, Pallaskenry, is to provide the best possible education based on Christian/Catholic values in partnership with parents and within a caring community. This school incorporates the characteristics of Salesian Education as practised by St. John Bosco in his "Preventive System".

In order to achieve this we aim to provide opportunities for students to:

1. gain skills, knowledge and understanding that will be of lasting value throughout their lives;
2. develop each individual's talents to the level of his/her personal potential for the benefit of Community and Society;
3. develop the characteristics appropriate to a member of a Christian community, including those of mutual respect and concern for others, irrespective of race, colour, gender or creed;
4. promote the physical and emotional well-being of students by developing self-esteem, personal responsibility and the ability to live and work with others;
5. work with staff committed to these ideals.

The Preventive System and the adult / young person relationship.

One constant in all Salesian work is that of the quality of the relationship between the adult and the young person. Don Bosco never believed in corporal punishment or repressive regimes of rules. Order was valued in all his work, but it had a human and caring face. Educators and young person know each other by name. Responsibility for the relationship lay first with the adult, but over time there is to be an appropriate sharing of responsibility with the young person.

Don Bosco's Preventive System' is built on three principles:

An educative relationship built on trust and reasonableness.

An encounter with the young that invites meaning and hope.

A relational approach that is seen in terms of kindness and partnership.

In Don Bosco's own words these have been handed down to us as the three principles of Reason, Religion and Loving Kindness. In the Christian and Salesian tradition, every person is seen as a child of God and is to be treated with respect and dignity. There is a depth to every person that deserves exploration, education and celebration. This can only happen when there is a proper and caring relationship between the young person and the adult accompanying him or her. Don Bosco always tried to live by his Catholic faith, and for him this meant that no one in need should ever be turned away from his centres.

The Preventive System informs all the relationships which exist in Salesian Secondary College and underpins all interactions between staff and young person.

The ethos of Salesian Secondary College is that of a listening and caring school, where adults place the young person at the centre of what we do.

Rationale and Scope.

The purpose of this policy, developed within the context of Looking at Our Schools and Child Protection Guidelines 2017, is to provide for the health and safety of all students, while engaged in school activities. The policy also attempts to provide boundaries for staff in the management of situations in which one to one interaction with a student is necessary.

The policy refers to all students of Salesian Secondary College and to visiting / exchange students.

One to one interaction between adult and young person arises as a matter of course in school. These interactions may be initiated by the adult or the student and may occur by appointment or of necessity during the course of the school day.

- The Guidance Counsellor, chaplain, members of the pastoral care team, members of the SMT and teacher mentors meet students on a one to one basis for counselling, guidance and pastoral care
- Year Heads, members of the SMT and classroom teachers meet students to discuss progress in class or behavioural matters
- SNAs and members of the SMT meet students in order to assist with personal care needs. Please refer to Intimate Care Policy.
- Administration and caretaking staff meet students for housekeeping matters
- All members of the school community are available to meet vulnerable students who look for support
- Oral and practical examiners, superintendents of separate centres, exam aides and scribes / readers will work with students in a one to one setting.

Responsibilities.

School personnel are bound by Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools 2017 and teachers are bound by the Code of Professional Conduct for Teachers 2012 and the Children First Act 2015. It is the adult's responsibility to be familiar with these documents.

Adults who meet students in professional one to one encounters must be aware that the encounter may have arisen precisely because the young person is feeling vulnerable or anxious at that moment. For this reason, the adult is entirely responsible for the careful management of the encounter and must be sensitive to the possibility that the young person may be emotional, confused, stressed or unsure of facts.

An adult can **never** promise confidentiality to a young person.

If a disclosure is made which will be brought to the attention of the Designated Liaison Person, the role of the adult is to listen without judgement and to adhere fully to Child Protection Guidelines.

At all times, the adult must conduct himself / herself in a manner which is respectful of the dignity of the young person.

Particularly when matters connected with the School Code of Behaviour are concerned, the adult must recognise that the young person may wish to disagree, argue, complain or deny. At times of stress, it is natural that facts may become distorted, memories unclear or that untruths may be told. During conflicted situations, the adult is responsible for ensuring that the School Code of Behaviour is upheld.

The following steps should be applied when an adult is involved in a professional one to one encounter with a student or other adult.

Encounters should occur, as far as is practicable, in a location which is easily accessible by a third party without warning.

Interviews should be conducted in rooms which can be "overlooked" and which have windows in the doors. The offices of the Principal and Deputy Principals, the RE room (used for Chaplaincy and counselling appointments), the SNA Hub, the Year Head room, the Guidance Counsellor's office are all suitable for interviews.

With due consideration for the privacy of a student who may be emotional or unwell, the door of the room in which a one to one encounter is occurring should be left ajar or unlocked.

It is correct that when an adult is in a room with a young person in a one to one encounter, internal phone calls should be taken. The offices will display a notice to this effect.

Planned one to one interviews should be notified to a colleague, where practicable. If an adult is involved in an unplanned encounter which is emotional, conflicted or difficult, it is wise for the adult to step out of the room to inform a colleague of what is happening, if it is safe to do so.

Chance one to one encounters should be held in view of other students or colleagues. If this is not possible, the adult should conduct the conversation while walking with the student to a public space.

The adult should at all times be conscious of leaving an appropriate space between himself / herself and the student.

It is advisable that adults keep a note of the time, location and substance of a one to one conversation with a student. Notes kept are subject to the usual data protection guidelines. If the matter under discussion is sensitive, the adult is advised to read notes back to the student for verification.

The Guidance Counsellor's office and the SNA hub are fitted with CCTV cameras.

The adult is advised of his / her responsibility to report any Child Protection concerns which arise during a one to one interview to the Designated Liaison Person.

If the adult becomes concerned for his / her safety at any point during the interview, he / she should terminate the interview and advise the student / other adult that another member of staff will continue the interview at a later date. The matter should be reported immediately to a member of the SMT.

Evaluation.

School management will accept feedback from staff, students and parents made through the proper use of the appropriate channels ie staff meetings, student committees and PSAC. This feedback will inform periodic evaluation of the policy by Management.

This policy is incorporated into the body of School Policy from the date of ratification.

Proposed date of review: _____

Date of ratification: _____

Signed: _____