



# SALESIAN SECONDARY COLLEGE PALLASKENRY, CO. LIMERICK

## WELLBEING POLICY

### ETHOS STATEMENT

In Salesian Secondary College, our priority is the contentment and wellbeing of our students as outlined in our mission statement, in which we aim to:

- Promote the holistic development - body, emotions, mind and spirit - of the young people with whom we work
- Create happy, spontaneous and welcoming environments in the places in which we work. This will help the young people to feel they belong, are appreciated and valued unconditionally. In such an environment the young people are supported and challenged to develop their full potential
- Provide leadership which is offered joyfully and willingly. The young people in turn are invited to become leaders and so help others in their growth
- Support the young people in the building up of positive and caring relationships with all those involved in their lives; family, peers, educators and all those charged with their welfare
- Give due importance to learning, especially to learning for life. In the spirit of Don Bosco's Preventive System of Education we enable young people to understand the reason behind boundaries, rules and requests. The Preventive System of Education promotes the active involvement both within and outside the classroom. This presence aspires to being always educative, person-centred, interested and engaged with the young people in our care. This helps them to develop emotionally and to become courageous self-motivated people, capable of making free and responsible choices
- Give a central role to celebration in the lives of the young, whether it be in the form of leisure and enjoyment of the meaningful marking of special occasions or of religious celebrations. In all of these we celebrate the fact that we are each loved by the Lord
- Encourage young people to reach out to the vulnerable and less fortunate in society, to develop an awareness of global issues and to have respect for the environment.
- Call for a critique of economic, political and social systems that oppress young people and to advocate on their behalf

Our Mission Statement makes specific reference to the Don Bosco's preventive system of education, which is a cornerstone of our work as a Salesian school. (Appendix A.)

We have drawn up this policy, mindful of the need to update and evaluate in the face of ever changing times.

The spirituality underpinning this ethos recognises the importance of the role of Church, of the Sacraments and of Mary. Our works are carried out within a Christian environment where, in an atmosphere of listening, the young people are encouraged to search for meaning and to discover and develop a relationship with God through dialogue, ritual and prayer forms suited to their age and culture. This is most aptly expressed within a community context in which parents/guardians, educators and young people work together to ensure that the total environment is conducive to the good of the young person.

## **RATIONALE**

The wellbeing of the whole school community is at the heart of our school's ethos statement and this policy has been drawn up to allow the school to adequately respond to the changing and diverse needs of our students. We are committed to the nurturing of the whole person so that they may be guided with care and respect to respond to the demands of modern life with resilience, optimism and a feeling of ownership. This ties in with the NCCA's definition of wellbeing which states that wellbeing is the:

"...realisation of abilities, taking care of physical wellbeing, coping with the normal stresses of life and having a sense of purpose and belonging to a wider community."

Furthermore, this is echoed by the Education Act, 1998 (Government of Ireland, 1998) which states that the school's role is:

"to promote the moral, spiritual, social and personal development of students and to provide health education for them in consultation with their parents having regard to the characteristic spirit of the schools".

We strive to achieve this in the following ways:

- All teachers have a role to play in their individual subject departments
- Teachers are continuously conscious of developing positive relationships to ensure wellbeing of staff and students
- A variety of extra-curricular activities ensure that the wellbeing of students is provided for
- We endeavour to create links with external agencies and parents
- Workshops and guest speakers on positive mental health and managing myself and others as part of SPHE, Religion, Guidance, Physical Education and C.S.P.E

- Guest speakers on internet and road safety are offered to both Junior and Senior Cycle students
- The SMT works closely with pastoral care teachers and regularly updates staff if particular students are facing challenges
- Parents / guardians are informed if pastoral issues arise, according to Child Protection Guidelines 2017
- Senior students are offered Relationship and Sexuality modules and The Ways to Wellbeing programme
- Retreat and reflective opportunities are provided throughout the school year such as First and Sixth Year Retreats and reflective outings for other years
- The school has a dedicated Pastoral Care team
- A student council represents the student voice
- Mentoring programmes promote positive relationships
- Don Bosco Merit Awards promote positive behaviour
- Justice and Peace Committee encourages charitable acts and links in the community
- Our school has an active young S.V.P committee
- Our Green Schools Committee promotes responsibility and awareness
- TY participation in programmes such as ANOIS, SOAR, VIP, GAISCE and Mindout encourage personal development, promote wellness and develop leadership skills

## **CURRICULAR PROVISION**

- All subject planning will include wellbeing through a whole school approach by means of the following wellbeing indicators - Active, Responsible, Connected, Resilient, Respected and Aware
- Topics/modules on Wellbeing are addressed in a variety of subjects e.g. S.P.H.E., C.S.P.E., P.E., Home Economics, Biology, Religious Education and Health Safety & Hygiene

## **EXTRA & CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

The College is committed to the provision of an extra- curricular and co-curricular programme which gives students the opportunity to contribute to the life of the school and, thus, derive wellbeing and joy from belonging to Salesian Secondary College.

These activities are facilitated, in the main, by volunteering staff.

The following is a list of activities which have taken place in recent years:

- Health Promotion Week - A week dedicated to Health Promotion is run by the Health Promoting committee in conjunction with the PE Department and Transition Year students. This week highlights what keeps us well, content and whole. Activities include: Nutrition talks, School 5K Run & other sporting activities, Healthy Eating/Lifestyle information sheets
- Mental Health Day - TY students prepare and deliver a presentation on Mental Health to all class groups. They then participate in the 'Walk in my Shoes' campaign by doing a 5K walk in order to raise awareness of wellbeing among students
- Trips - Outdoor Pursuit trips, cultural trips abroad, subject related trips (History, Science, Religion, CSPE, Geography, Art)

- Students are encouraged and provided with opportunities to display their talent and creativity through participation in the annual school musical
- Music plays an important role in school life with opportunities for students to join the school choir and/ the School Traditional Music group who perform throughout the year
- Events such as Science Day, European Day of Languages, Literacy Day, Seachtain na Gaeilge promote positivity around learning
- Art and Home Economics projects, workshops and competitions
- Life skills workshops are offered to TY students by the ISOE
- Body Confidence workshops are offered to Junior Cycle girls in order to aid in increasing self-esteem and positive self-image
- Poetry workshops, essay and creative writing opportunities
- A broad range of extra-curricular sporting activities are provided for encouraging participation in physical activity - Hurling, Gaelic Football, Athletics, Cross-Country Running, Soccer, Rugby and Rowing
- Subject, general quizzes and competitions eg. AILLO, BT Young Scientist Competition
- Catholic Schools Week
- Religious Liturgical Services (in line with the school ethos)
- Fundraising events for charity eg. Concern Fasts, bake sales, non-uniform day etc. and school fundraisers create positive links with the community.
- Graduation Ceremony
- Meditation and Class Liturgies in RE
- Friends for Life Programme
- Mentoring programmes

## **STAFF WELLBEING**

The College recognises that a healthy school has a healthy staff at its core. The Board of Management, Principal and Deputy Principals work to create a healthy dynamic, in which staff needs are met.

- Staff Training on wellbeing- 10/10/17
- INSPIRE WELLBEING details, 'Thought of the Week' and other information placed on Health & Wellbeing noticeboard in staffroom
- The Board of Management supports the work of its staff and are kept up to date of this work at board meetings
- School management work collaboratively with the whole staff.
- Social Committee - responsible for end of term/year social events
- Book Club
- Goodwill gestures by management to staff eg. dinner provided to staff on PT meeting days, treats to celebrate occasions etc.
- Teacher unions support their members
- The school has agreed the Complaints and Grievance Procedures and staff are informed as to how to address concerns about their own wellbeing
- Teachers in training and newly appointed teachers are mentored in their Subject Departments and by the SMT
- The College has a history of close peer collaboration and support. This is embedded in the lifeblood of the school.

## **GUIDANCE: GUIDANCE COUNSELLING**

The term “guidance” is synonymous with the terms “guidance counselling” and “guidance & counselling”. Guidance is a range of learning experiences provided in a developmental sequence, designed to assist students to make choices about their lives and to make changes consequent on these choices. These choices may be categorised into four separate but interlinked areas:

- Moral and Spiritual
- Personal and Social
- Educational
- Career

Provision of sensitive care and support to students learning to cope with many facets of their personal development.

The school has a Guidance Policy which reflects the critical role the function plays in school life.

## **PASTORAL CARE**

The pastoral care of our students begins before their arrival into 1st Year, through information sessions, parents’ / guardians’ meetings and induction. Reference Appendix A.

As part of student wellbeing in the school, the Pastoral Care team meet each week in school to discuss ‘at risk students’. This team is represented by the Guidance Counsellor, Chaplain, RE Department, SEN Department and Management. Dedicated Pastoral Care teachers provide one to one care for students on an appointment basis or as the need arises.

The Pastoral Care team are responsible for:

- Teacher Mentoring Programme
- Personal Counselling
- The Guidance Counsellor liaises with outside agencies
- The Pastoral Care Team and Year Heads work closely together

## **YEAR HEAD**

- Pays careful attention to every aspect of the Year Group, which contributes to the learning environment of the school
- Ensures the implementation of the Code of Behaviour in order to provide a safe space for all students in which to develop.
- Monitors and reviews progress of Year Group
- Supports class teachers in the execution of their pastoral responsibilities
- Liaises and/consults with students, teachers, parents and management
- Helps to build a positive spirit
- Acknowledges and rewards achievements
- Ensures that all school Procedures and Systems operate effectively in the Year Group

## **TUTOR**

- Has responsibility for the pastoral care of each member of the class
- Ensures that each student feels cared for
- Develops an awareness of the needs of the individual students
- Motivates students and builds a sense of class pride
- Praises excellence and effort
- Consults with the Year Head
- Meets with tutor class on a weekly basis
- Checks and signs journals
- Provides behavioural guidance

## **SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS**

The SEN Department works on the basis that the uniqueness of each individual demands a pastoral approach to building understanding in the students of their own needs, resilience and courage.

SEN is a pillar of the curriculum and occupies a central place in the school timetable. We have an ASD Unit (“The Den”)

The resource teachers and SNAs meet with the Deputy Principals each week to oversee student progress in Learning Support and Resource. During this time resource staff

- ensure that student support files are being created
- plan for testing and target achievement
- examine resource allocation in the context of newly identified needs and requests for support from teachers and parents for students
- Reflect on the wellbeing of the learners and discuss how best to meet needs as they arise
- Consider the role of SNAs in the management of students with SEN

The Resource team manages the creation of the learning groups at the beginning of the year. Planning for SEN delivery takes into account High and low incident needs students through withdrawal, team teaching, small class groups, EBD & ASD support. In keeping with the ethos of the school we also support those students whose need has been more locally identified by mainstream teaching staff in consultation with parents. Adjusting the level of academic stress and reorganising support is a key element to managing student wellbeing. This work is governed by the SEN policy which details the practice in the school in relation to the creation of IEPs for individual students.

## **RECOGNITION OF STUDENT PARTICIPATION, EFFORT AND ACHIEVEMENT**

All teachers have a role to play in relation to acknowledging and rewarding student effort. This can be done through the following:

- Student Journal - on a day to day basis
- Tutor News - emailed weekly to all teachers, parents and students
- Merit System

- Newsletters- end of term and year-acknowledging student achievement
- Academic awards of excellence - based on Junior and Leaving Certificate results
- Awards Night - 6th Year Students - non-academic

### **Merit System**

- Part of the schools overall well being policy
- It Generates positivity and leads to improved behaviour
- Each month teachers record positive behaviours on VS ware under pre prescribed headings.
- One male and one female recipient from each year will receive a Don Bosco Award for the most positive notes
- With our merit system the reward factor and formal recognition has proved to create a positive atmosphere and has improved behavioural problems

## **MENTORING**

### **Teacher Student Mentoring**

We have a teacher student mentoring programme in our school where teachers volunteer and are assigned a particular student to mentor throughout the year. This is a way of checking in with students who may find school/their personal life difficult and who may need extra support. This system offers each individual student the opportunity to express any concerns that they may have. Teacher student mentoring is available to both Junior and Senior Cycle students.

### **Peer Mentoring**

Senior students are trained to work with First Year students to ensure a smooth transition from Primary to Secondary School. The students are trained through the Ceangail Mentoring programme prior to First Years starting in the school. Mentors are responsible for the organisation and supervision of lunchtime activities for First Years. They are also there to support the younger students as they integrate into our school.

### **SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT.**

The school has in place a number of staff committees which regularly reflect on our performance as a wellbeing promoting school and which advise the whole school community on measures needed to improve.

For example:

- The School Development Committee focuses on the development of policy and whole school interventions to promote teaching and learning
- The PR Committee broadcasts good news stories of endeavour, participation, contribution and achievement
- The Transition Year Planning Committee review the success or otherwise of TY initiatives
- The Senior Management Team plans for the facilitation of all the different committees' goals and targets for the year

## **LINKS WITH OTHER SCHOOL POLICIES**

- Child Safeguarding Statement
- Code of Behaviour
- Child Protection (Dec 17/Jan 18)
- S.P.H.E.
- R.S.E
- Circular 0023/2010
- C.S.P.E
- P.E
- Anti-Bullying
- ASD Policy
- Entrance Policy
- Acceptable Use Policy (I.C.T.)
- Substance Use
- Critical Incident
- Dignity in the Workplace

## **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.

## **REVIEW AND RATIFICATION**

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management of Salesian Secondary College on:

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Chairperson's signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Principal's signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Review Date: \_\_\_\_\_



## Appendix A.



### 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 word 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.

## Appendix B.

### Pastoral care of the Salesian Secondary College's student:

Our Pastoral Care Structure is the bedrock of all we do in Salesian Secondary College....

