

2010

CASTLETROY COLLEGE PASTORAL CARE PROVISION



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## Introduction

The underlying philosophy of Castletroy College is based on the education of the whole person. The College fosters the intellectual, spiritual, social, personal, artistic, physical and vocational development of all its students. The confidence and self-esteem of our students is promoted through a broad range of curricular and extra-curricular experiences. The formal curriculum is comprehensive and the structure of the timetable allows for each individual's unique strengths and talents. Students, parents and staff are encouraged to participate in making a positive contribution to the shaping of the College, its image and its role in the community.

In practical terms this means:

- Respect for the dignity of each student and member of staff and for the environment of the school.
- Commitment to the fullest development of the unique gifts and qualities of all students.
- Awareness of the home and local environment in which the student's broader education takes place.
- Identification of the school support systems needed for the development of students in terms of wholeness and dignity and to deal with problems and difficulties.
- Effective liaison with external agencies in order to support students in any needful situation.
- Communication, participation and collaboration between home and school.
- Policies and practices which promote wholeness, dignity and growth.

All members of staff, teaching and non-teaching, are involved in pastoral care through all their contacts with students. The school itself is a pastoral institution. Pastoral care is implicit and explicit in its expression. It is an integral part of the school's ethos and curriculum. Formal teaching of Personal and Social Education occurs in weekly forms (CSPE and SPHE programmes). Senior classes follow a programme of Personal Development and Life Skills.

Liaison with parents plays a vital role in the school's commitment to Pastoral Care. This takes the form of parent/teacher meetings and communication between staff and parents about the progress and development of individual students as required.

Staff development in pastoral care is fundamental to the success of the school's provision. In-service days have focused on varied aspects of the philosophy. Since Castletroy College has now a student population in excess of one thousand a second deputy principal has been appointed with a specific brief to develop and oversee all areas of pastoral care provision within the school community. Pastoral care procedures within Castletroy College are reviewed regularly.

Tutors meet the members of their form classes individually every Monday morning to review and sign the student's journal. This allows tutors to monitor students' behaviour, academic attainment and homework organisation. The tutor reports to the year head in instances where students might be in need of further pastoral interventions.

Year Heads seek to know each member of their year group and to monitor and encourage their development as they progress from first to sixth year. The yearhead works closely with tutors, teachers, senior staff and parents to provide for the pastoral welfare of all students in his/her care. All yearheads are members of either the school's junior or senior pastoral care team which meets on a weekly basis. The yearhead conducts daily assemblies with his/her year group and reports to parents twice yearly by means of the Christmas and summer examinations' reports and/or whenever the need of an individual student requires such intervention.

Pastoral Care Teams are comprised of the principal, the deputy principal, guidance counsellors, the chaplain, the special education co-ordinator and yearheads. Students who have come to the attention of the yearhead through their tutors, teachers or any other member of the school community, are discussed by the entire pastoral team who collectively decide what steps need to be taken to assist the student. Academic, behavioural, social, emotional issues are within the general remit of these meetings. When the need arises, students can be referred forward for counselling and/or other interventions with more specialised personnel within and outside of the school community. Communication with parents/guardians frequently arises as a consequence of issues arising from these meetings. Minutes of these weekly meetings are available to all teachers on staff notice boards.

The Chaplain is a faith presence in the school community who is available to all students and staff. She/he accompanies members of the school community on their journey through life. The chaplain's non-disciplinary role in the school enables him/her to develop a relationship of trust with the students, staff and parents. The chaplain meets students individually and in class groups, is an associate member of the student support team and both junior and senior pastoral care committees.

The Career/Guidance Counsellor is involved in a holistic way in all matters academic, social, cultural and/or emotional relating to students. She/he provides the student with meaningful opportunities to work in self-defined ways towards living in a more satisfying and resourceful manner as individuals and as members of the broader community. Guidance counsellors meet students on an individual basis and report weekly to both pastoral care committees and the student support team.

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The Student Support Team is currently comprised of two guidance counsellors, the chaplain, three senior staff members and the deputy principal charged with pastoral care. The team is trained by the HSE and Co. Limerick VEC in student support and crisis response. It is overseen by the VEC supervisor in student support at least three times annually. The team meets on a weekly basis to discuss the needs of students deemed to be at risk, where necessary the team conducts risk assessments and takes appropriate action. Feedback to staff is delivered in a limited format owing to the confidential nature of many of the issues involved. At risk students are identified by means of a separate listing under the messaging section of e Portal.

The Special Education coordinator and deputy principal for pastoral care both visit local primary schools in the month of Feb/March with the specific remit of identifying what students will require Special Education supports and to gather data that will assist their integration into school life. Weekly Special Education meetings are held to discuss these students' progress followed by regular briefings of the staff. An open session with incoming students and parents is organised in June to ease their transition into the secondary school environment with a view to allaying apprehension and fears. Latterly this has been extended to include all incoming first years.

The Code of Behaviour outlines the behaviour which is expected and all students, staff and parents are encouraged to be vigilant in the recognition and reporting of all inappropriate behaviour. The College is subject to the law of the land and must regulate for health and safety of all members of the college community(eg No Smoking) as required in legislation. Castletroy College's code of behaviour seeks to encourage an awareness of equality and the necessity for care and tolerance. The code is positive and developmental in nature and is centred on respect for oneself, others and the environment. It aims to promote a spirit of self discipline and integrity. Positive discipline is all embracing and the expectations of the College will set consistently high standards in both academic and behavioural matters.

Child Protection. Each member of staff is furnished with an individual copy of the DES publication, Child Protection Guidelines for Post Primary Schools and the names of the chief and deputy designated liaison persons.. The publication is also available on the school VLE in pdf format. New staff members are also instructed how to access the full document on the VLE.

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