

# Durston House

## Pastoral Care Policy

### Aims of the Policy

- to state clearly the importance of the care that Durston House gives as part of the education that it offers the whole person
- to set out the school's approach to the care of all pupils in the school, which reflects its ethos and mission

### Objectives of the Policy

- to establish a school environment in which the welfare of each pupil is paramount
- to clarify the structure of care that is best suited to the needs of the pupils at Durston House
- to be an umbrella statement, from which emanate other policies pertaining to the care of the pupils
- to make sure the different aspects of care complement and dovetail one another
- to complement the school's **Ethos, Mission, Behaviour Policy** (including the **Code of Behaviour**), the **Safeguarding Policy**, the **Rewards and Sanctions Policy**, the **Anti-Bullying Policy**, the **Use of the Internet and Digital Technology Policy** (all in the School Handbook) and the **Staff Professional Protocol**, the **Code of Safe Working Practice** and the **Staff Acceptable Use of Electronic Communication Policy** (Staff Handbook).

### Introduction

Durston House recognises that the education of an individual encompasses all that affects the human condition, the academic, the physical, the emotional, the spiritual, the moral and the cultural. For a pupil's education to thrive, the Pastoral Care given him is of paramount importance. Such care takes in all that he does at school and takes account of all that happens at home. It must be supportive and encouraging. It recognises that aspects of human nature are not mutually exclusive, but are developed and nurtured in balance, in a secure and positive environment. A happy, confident pupil achieves significant personal development. From a community that enthuses about respect and consideration for self and others, a pupil learns how to be a well-rounded member of society.

All staff take seriously this holistic care of boys and the need to safeguard them from harm. Each teacher and member of the non-teaching staff has responsibility for the Pastoral Care of all boys in the school, whether he or she might work directly with particular boys, or not. It is a personal interest in boys, in what they do and how they go about their day, in their curricular work, their relationships, their play. Such care is imbued with the ethos of 'mutual respect and understanding, fairness and opportunities for all...' and reflects the school Mission, '...a disciplined environment within which security and happiness are paramount...' It can occur in a formal as well as informal way, at all times of the school day.

This policy sets out the nature of Pastoral Care at Durston House and highlights the component policies that support it, all with the aim of providing boys with security, contentment and success. It applies to all pupils at Durston House, including those in Reception (EYFS).

## **The Role of Staff Members**

The following is not hierarchical, and does not presuppose that any part of the structure is better equipped at caring for the boys. All parts of the structure can operate exclusively and/or in conjunction to affect that which is in the best interests of the boys.

### **Each Member of Staff**

The duty of care for all pupils is the responsibility of the whole staff, teachers and non-teachers alike. It is vital that everyone whose work brings him/her into contact with pupils is active in the care of all pupils, vigilant in monitoring the needs and interests of the group as well as those of the individual. There may be times when pupils may wish to seek the advice or support of any member of staff in whom they trust. This is encouraged. The member of staff has a responsibility to inform or consult others, in particular, the Form Teacher.

### **Form Teacher**

Responsibility for the Pastoral Care of particular pupils in particular Form Classes is delegated to the Form Teachers, whose closer contact and detailed knowledge of each boy in their Forms should enable them to co-ordinate his day-to-day care. The Form Teacher is the first point of contact for pupils or parents. Pupils benefit if they recognise that home and school are working together, so positive relationships and communication are essential. The Form Teacher should be consulted by other members of staff about an individual's needs, and he/she will make sure that important information is recorded and made known to all adults who need to know.

### **Senior Management**

The pastoral work of the staff and Form Teachers is monitored and supported by SMT members. Form Teachers should liaise closely with them, consult them where necessary, especially when parents are involved. All may need to discuss the welfare and care of pupils with parents, but the most sensitive issues will, in the first instance, be referred to the Deputy Head, who will consult the Headmaster, if appropriate. Clear communication among staff members, Form Teachers, and SMT members is important.

### **Deputy Head**

Responsibility for co-ordinating and overseeing the Pastoral Care of pupils is delegated to the Deputy Head by the Headmaster. He/she supports and liaises with other staff members and parents, where necessary, about the care of pupils. He/she leads the Heads of Junior School and Pre-Prep in the review and implementation of all Pastoral Care policies and strategies. Monitoring all aspects of Pastoral Care, the Deputy Head reviews its effectiveness and, in consultation with the staff and SMT, initiates changes where necessary. It is vital that positive and negative aspects of the welfare of pupils are brought to his/her attention. The Deputy Head is the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead in the school.

### **Headmaster**

The Headmaster is accountable for the education of all pupils, and hence, their Pastoral Care in the school. He keeps himself abreast of all issues concerning their care, through consultation with the Deputy Head and other members of staff, as well as with parents. The Headmaster deals with any matter that becomes a serious crisis, particularly where one boy's problems threaten the success or happiness of others or where parents' confidence in Durston House is endangered. The Headmaster is the Designated Safeguarding Lead in the school.

## **The Delivery of Pastoral Care**

### **Individuals**

It is accepted at Durston House that Pastoral Care comes in many guises, some formal and others less so, and can be dispensed by any member of staff, at any time. Acknowledgement of pupils and all they do is important. A general interest in them as people, as well as pupils, plays a major part in their feeling of well-being and contentment. This can be achieved through something as simple as a kind remark, an awareness of their behaviour or a manner that is inclusive. Some pupils may feel comfortable seeking care outside that which is provided by the Form Room, Form Teacher or members of SMT. They may relate better to one member of staff than another, and seek his/her support. Any avenue of Pastoral Care that staff members provide is supported and encouraged.

### **Forms Classes**

Forms are rearranged each year, ensuring that all pupils relate to a wide range of those in their year group, as well as staff. Pupils should feel welcome and comfortable in the Form and should learn to identify with it and its Form Teacher. It is in the Form that much social, moral and emotional development will occur, not just in PSHME lessons, but also in the general interaction of all. Together the Form reinforces all policies that pertain to Pastoral Care, as listed in the Objectives of this policy.

### **Form Teachers**

The tone and success of the Form Class is set by the Form Teacher, whose more formal role in Pastoral Care is pivotal. A constructive Form ethos will depend on the commitment of the Form Teacher, his/her consistency of approach, knowledge of boys and interest in all. Pupils easily recognise a Form Teacher who does 'care'. The Form Teacher reinforces the policies that pertain to Pastoral Care, as listed in the Objectives of this policy, all of which are designed to create the ordered, calm and safe environment that is Durston House. The Form teacher liaises with subject teachers, other staff members, including the Director of Studies, and the Heads of Junior School and Pre-Prep or the Deputy Head, who liaise with each other, so that a 'joined-up' approach to a pupil's welfare can be taken.

### **Form Rooms**

A positive, physical environment is important if a healthy Form spirit is to be nurtured. Form Teachers help the pupils develop a pride in the Form Room by allowing them input and giving them responsibility for its upkeep. The room should be tidy, clean and interesting, worthy of Form pride.

### **PSHME**

Personal, Social, Health, Moral and Economic education is an essential part of the school's Pastoral Care. Through its more formal structure, Pastoral Care is reinforced and developed, so that all pupils are helped to live happy, confident, independent, responsible lives. PSHME occurs weekly, as a timetabled lesson, taught by the Head of PSHME in Years 5-8 and by the Form Teacher in Pre-Prep and Junior School.

### **Houses**

The House system at Durston House allows for an alternative grouping of pupils, who gather together with staff appointed to that House. Pupils stay in this House group throughout their time at the school. As well, the Houses are divided into a number of Vertical Groups, each of which comprises at least one Year 8 Vertical Group Leader and pupils from every other year group, right down to Reception. There are House Assemblies and Vertical Group Meetings throughout the term. The House spirit and House Vertical Group spirit engender a sense of belonging and security and an opportunity to mix with older and younger pupils on a regular basis. These House gatherings and the House sports and cultural competitions provide an opportunity for all

pupils and staff to participate in activities outside the classroom and for many to excel, in a setting with which pupils can identify and feel supported. The Head of House and other staff in the House, together with the House Captain and other Year 8 Vertical Group Leaders, have the chance to reinforce positive values such as those of a group spirit, concern and care for others throughout the school, healthy competition, fair play, and other values reflecting the school's Ethos and Mission.

**Weekly Report (see Rewards and Sanctions Policy)**

From the perspective of Pastoral Care, the Weekly Report (Junior, Middle and Upper Schools) can be used to monitor the general welfare of a pupil, through his behaviour, work and social interaction. It provides support for pupils during the school day, enabling them to make the most of their time at school, and allowing staff to support the pupil, to encourage him and to congratulate him for progress made. If the Deputy Head, or the Head of Junior School deem it appropriate, it is used, in consultation with the pupil, the parents and the staff. They decide the length of time the pupil is to be on report. It is given to a pupil to take to each session of the school day and have the teacher or member of staff fill it in. At the end of the day it is monitored by the Deputy Head, or the Head of Junior School, discussed with the pupil, and taken home for parental signature, to be returned the next day. At the end of the time on report, a review is made about the pupil's progress, in consultation him, his parents and the staff. It may be necessary to amend or extend its use.

**Recording Pastoral Care Issues**

All benefit from the careful recording of Pastoral Care issues. Issues that arise through discussion between staff members and pupils, or staff members and parents, which are of significance, are recorded. These are recorded on the Oasis database. Such records enable all who need to know to be informed and an on-going record to be kept, noting all that affects the care given to pupils or that deters from the happiness and security that they have a right to enjoy. Issues relating to Safeguarding, Work or Behaviour, Bullying, or other general pastoral issues can be recorded here. Any significant meeting between a member of staff and the parents is recorded on the database as well, with a paper copy being placed in the pupil's file. A significant meeting means any contact, in person or by telephone, that gives rise to anything that might need to be remembered, or that may help colleagues, or that the parents may later rely on. All significant written communication is drawn to the attention of all who need to know.

***Evaluation of this Policy***

*This policy will be evaluated biennially by the school, amended where necessary and approved by SMT.*

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