



Pastoral Care Policy and Procedures

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MYDDELTON COLLEGE PASTORAL CARE POLICY AND PROCEDURES

This is a whole-School Policy.

1. What is pastoral care?

All pupils require emotional and pastoral support in their educational journeys. This is why pastoral care at Myddelton College is a priority. Pastoral care is a provision schools make to ensure the physical and emotional welfare of their pupils.

Successful pastoral support helps all children to feel safe, happy and involved in the school community, and able to perform to their full potential. Happy pupils will integrate well with others and any problems will be spotted early and will be dealt with.

All parents and staff at Myddelton want their children to be happy and high-quality pastoral care at school helps to ensure this. Children with good physical and mental health perform better at school and achieve more academically.

PSHE lessons contribute a lot towards children's wellbeing. They teach important life skills which pupils can implement in their own lives to better themselves. High quality pastoral care at school ultimately helps to build character in students which will help them in their adult lives.

Effective pastoral care doesn't just happen – it demands an incredible amount of time, energy, planning and co-ordination. Pupil Voice surveys also help us to discover views and opinions.

2. High quality pastoral care:

High quality pastoral care understands the importance of keeping a child's needs at the centre of the School. This often means ensuring children feel comfortable talking with teachers and tutors about any problem they might be having. This could happen in one-to-one sessions with their teachers, or in regular drop-in sessions with pastoral staff, for example.

Sometimes, young people may not feel comfortable reaching out when they need help - especially if they don't understand what help is available to them. This is why it is important that teachers and tutors are able to pick up on subtle cues which might indicate a problem with a child's wellbeing, for example.

High quality pastoral care at school often means helping children plan for their future. This can happen in a number of different ways - from teaching core subjects and improving students' basic knowledge of these topics, to helping them choose which GCSEs to pursue after KS3. Teachers and tutors will understand that their role is often about more than education: it's about helping children prepare for their future.

3. What parents need to understand about our pastoral care:

The term pastoral care is often used inconsistently because it means different things to different people and at different stages of education. For parents of primary school-aged children, they may want their children to be going to school and going into a homely classroom. However, secondary school parents may be more concerned about concerns like safety on social media.

Pupils may also have their own view of what pastoral care means to them. They may want easy access to a First Aider when they have grazed their knee, or their Head of House when they are anxious about school. The truth is that all of these elements make up a part of what pastoral care is, but they miss the bigger picture.

Pastoral care consists of policies and procedures that work irrespective of personnel. No matter who is working in the school, all staff should be able to provide the same high level of pastoral support, and know to whom they should refer challenging situations when needed.

In addition, effective pastoral care defines boundaries for behaviour: our behaviour policy and procedures, to include school expectations and rules, ensure everyone knows exactly what to expect of themselves and everyone else. Staff are inducted to ensure they can operate our policies and procedures with ease.

4. Safeguarding and Pastoral Care:

Safeguarding is a big part of what makes up pastoral care at Myddelton College. Safeguarding is about protecting children, preventing abuse and ensuring safety.

Safeguarding is also about knowing:

- what to do when a child has an accident or feels ill. No matter whether it is a graze in the playground or a trip to A&E, all staff should know what to do,
- that the site and premises are as safe and secure as they can be,
- ensuring that everyone who comes into contact with children during their school day is vetted, has references and that records of these things are regularly updated,
- how to identify child welfare problems and how to deal with them,
- how to teach children to keep themselves safe.

5. Pastoral Support at School:

We also provide good quality pastoral support as well as pastoral care. Strong pastoral support can be a game-changer for a lot of children and help to make school feel like a safe haven. All staff take on part of the corporate responsibility so our pupils have lots of options for who they can talk to - so they always feel as supported as possible.

6. The Aims of high-quality pastoral care are to:

- enhance learners' experiences,
- support teaching and learning,
- prepare learners for their next steps,
- ensure children feel and are safe,
- ensure that learners benefit from well-being support,
- teach learners to show respect for others,
- maintain an orderly environment.

Effective high-quality pastoral care will:

- improve students' attendance and retention rates,
- foster an orderly atmosphere so all pupils can access opportunities, and enhance achievement,
- promote inclusion, equality and appreciation of diversity,
- teach respect for self and others.

7. We achieve this by:

- ensuring teachers are devoted to the personal, social development, education and care of all pupils;
- teachers accepting responsibility for children's welfare and progress;
- teachers and support staff putting pastoral care first - to get the best out of everyone;
- seeing pastoral care at the core of our school, with focus on personal development and wellbeing;
- prioritising happiness and welfare.

A distributed model of pastoral care delivery, where all staff know the actions they are required to take both proactively and reactively, gets the best results. This model is supported by helping older pupils to exercise a degree of responsibility for younger members of the school whilst acting as prefects, peer supporters and captains of House teams.

8. Delivery via the Head of Prep School and Class teachers, and Heads of Houses and their tutor team:

Although every teacher has a tutorial pastoral responsibility, pastoral leaders are absolutely critical for identifying, understanding, and responding to challenges. The management and administration of pastoral care are undertaken by leaders who plan, resource, monitor, evaluate, encourage and facilitate our pastoral care.

The Head of Prep School (for ages 5-11) and Head of House (from age 11):

will ensure that pupils are happy and successful. These pastoral leaders need to:

- possess 20/20 vision,
- be able to lead a team of professionals to deliver pastoral care with energy and insight,
- provide clear and consistent communication within an enabling culture,
- create relationships with children and their parents and tutors which foster care and empathy.

Prep School class teachers and Senior school tutors ensure that each pupil:

- achieves their academic potential,
- has good attendance and punctuality,
- has high standards of personal behaviour, uniform and appearance,
- is supported in relation to any personal barriers which could limit their success,
- is protected in situations where other pupils fail to uphold the school standards.

They also

- ensure the classroom/tutor room is a supportive environment so children are at ease and flourish,
- get to know each child/tutee well by sharing conversations and establishing trust and mutual regard,
- develop a broad knowledge of each child's/tutee's academic progress and extra-curricular involvements, to allow and promote meaningful dialogue both with children/tutees and their parents/carers,
- encourage and assist each child/tutee to achieve at a higher level,
- promote the Myddelton 'can-do' philosophy,
- write informed and detailed Child/Tutee Progress Reports for the Head of Prep or Head of House,
- provide constructive and informed advice and comment for children/young people,
- enforce the school's standards in relation to uniform, behaviour and conduct,
- recognise and praise high levels of effort and contribution,
- keep parents or carers informed of any concerns and hold meetings with parents where appropriate,
- provide timely and purposeful counselling and advice,
- act as an advocate when required,
- work with the Head of Prep or Head of House to ensure that training needs for pastoral staff are identified.

9. Team Training:

The Head of Prep School and Heads of Houses cannot work in isolation; they require the support of every colleague to create an environment which helps pupils flourish. For this, they and their team tutors require quality training.

The first requirement: is to complete appropriate safeguarding training, both to understand and follow safeguarding procedures and protocols which are of paramount importance ; for this reason, the Designated Safeguarding Lead plays a vital role both in training, leading and overseeing safeguarding in Houses.

10. The diverse range of issues faced by Head of Prep with class teachers, and Heads of Houses with tutors requires proficiency in:

- inclusion,
- anti-bullying practices,
- developing good pupil behaviour through, principally, praise with rewards,
- inclusion, equality and diversity, and anti-racism,
- mental health and well-being provision,
- relationships and sex education, and consent,
- ability to work with outside agencies,
- managing challenging parents,
- effective administration.

Some training is delivered purely in-house but we need to be outward-looking, strategic and selective in identifying appropriate Continuous Professional Development courses; we recommend: <https://cpdonline.co.uk>
Please talk to either the DSL or Headmaster if you wish to undertake such courses.

11. Team members having a clear idea what pastoral care is:

Pastoral care is not an end in itself but is firmly embedded in the aims, values and beliefs of the school.

Whilst pastoral care means different things in different contexts, it involves:

- involving parents when and as appropriate, and seeking colleagues' advice where unsure,
- listening and counselling, without promising confidentiality,
- open door, age and stage appropriate guidance to children, professionally provided,
- reconciling through calm and reasoned suggestion and argument,
- colleague peer support, and a readiness to receive advice and support from colleagues,
- mentoring and nurturing of pupils ensuring careful referral whenever appropriate,
- healthy but safe risk-taking,
- negotiation, often using good humour 'to win hearts and minds',
- critical reflection, and learning through this,
- empowerment of children and young people to make informed (and consensual) choices but only when appropriate.

Pastoral care makes a difference when professionals and parents work together; it thus has a strong inter-agency requirement with timely communications between key partners, relevant organisations and families.

12. High quality pastoral care is anticipatory:

Effective pastoral care is proactive and preventative, in that the school provides a range of activities and supports various processes that anticipate 'critical incidents' in children's lives and aims to prevent and reduce the need for reactive action.

Risks, when managed and risk-assessed, are appropriate providing parents have been informed about such opportunities and challenges. Through participation and challenge, young people can be helped to grow and develop character and personality.

Our pastoral care is regularly reviewed and updated so that it is responsive and current. Strengths and weaknesses are identified so care is not easily compromised or short-changed. Vulnerable learners, in particular, should always be on our radar.

Pastoral care is hugely collaborative and policies, procedures and processes are the corporate result of regular communication, information sharing and shared responsibility. Myddelton College takes pastoral care seriously because it defines our identity as an organisation; we share this with parents who are asked to seek information and elaboration as needed, clarity when this is thought not to exist, and where special matters pertaining to a pupil's family life are likely to impact on a pupil's life in school. By and through the sharing of responsibility for our younger children, pupils and young adults, together we can work more effectively to safeguard their education and transition successfully post-Myddelton College.

Ultimately, the best pastoral care is defined by the quality and effectiveness of relationships, strong home-school partnerships, high expectations and how staff and parents respond together to meet the needs of our children and young people.

13. Pastoral care specific to boarding:

1. Boarders' possessions – boarders either have their own or share a study bedroom. This room is 'private' unless others are invited in. Should possessions go missing, and they do quite often, a thorough search invariably finds them in one of the communal areas of the House. Should there be, very occasionally, clear evidence or suspicion of theft, the House tutors and Head of Boarding become involved. Tutors run House banks for boarders.
2. Food and drink provision and preparation – menus are published in advance, and the catering manager is available to discuss catering arrangements, the quality and quantity of food provided, and the variety of food to reflect personal preferences, likes and dislikes and international preferences. Many boarders choose to supplement diets with other food and drinks purchased locally.
3. Health and well-being – boarders who are unwell will contact Matron or a tutor, or the Head of Boarding who will identify the individual's condition with the boarder and then seek appropriate medical advice, either from the local medical or dental practice, or take the boarder to hospital. The Head of Boarding does not hesitate to seek a medical diagnosis should the situation warrant this.
4. Safeguarding – the boarding Houses ensure security of buildings during the day, at night and over the weekends by checking locks and window locks work, alarms are set, and digital code pads are used to allow only authorised access. The DSL, or a DDSL is always available to contact.
5. Health and safety – the school has related policies which determine checks and actions. Should staff or pupils identify any causes for concern, or items which need repair or replacement, they are reported to the maintenance department. Risk assessments provide reflective consideration of both premises and fittings, as well as procedures and activities.
6. Fire precautions and drills – the school's maintenance department checks fire precautions and regular fire practices are held. Details are recorded appropriately.
7. Induction and individual support – new boarders are inducted and supported until they feel 'at home'. Each House has a boarding handbook which is issued before boarders arrive and this information is reviewed in light of each new cohort's comment, advice and suggestions.
8. Contacting parents and carers – boarders may contact their family and friends at any time except between late evening and breakfast when 'phones are not to be used'. Tutors and House Parents are in contact sufficiently often to ensure they are known parents well.

9. Securing boarders' views – regular House meetings and consultative meetings allow all boarders, either in person or through their representatives, to make suggestions and express opinions. Each meeting will start by reviewing agreed actions from earlier meetings.
10. Complaints – almost all are informal, low-level complaints and are dealt with by tutors or duty staff. However, whenever a formal complaint is received, the Headmaster will initiate a hearing panel to consider the complaint.
11. Positive behaviour and relationships – good behaviour is expected, based around principles of consideration and support for others. Rules and requests are discussed at House meetings; answers are given to questions put by boarders about limits to agreements and safeguarding aspects of decision-making are regularly highlighted.
12. Preventing bullying – any concerns reported or recognised will be dealt with immediately by tutors or the Head of Boarding. The boarding Houses follow the school's anti-bullying policy and procedures guidelines. Boarders who have experienced bullying are supported until tutors are satisfied the matter has been resolved.
13. Promoting good relationships – the quality of relationships between pupils and with staff is considered to be very good in the main – perhaps reflecting the School's ethos and the work undertaken by tutors and in PSHE and RSE classes. Visitors and residents often comment upon the happy and relaxed atmosphere in Houses. However, should there be occasions when this is not the case, tutors ask boarders to consider others' perspectives and adjust their manner, actions or behaviour accordingly. This invariably improves situations but a House complaints' policy exists, just in case.
14. Activities and free time – whilst boarders often ask for 'down time', there are opportunities to:
 - Use the school's facilities – art room, music studios, library, sports' hall and fitness area
 - Use the school's playing fields
 - Join the CCF, D of E or LTTO outings
 - Visit the town by agreement
 - Join a local club once the necessary permissions have been sought and obtained
 - Join a school outing – to Liverpool, Manchester, Chester
 - Visit the north Wales coast or the National Park to walk and enjoy the local environment.
15. Safer recruitment – all those involved in pastoral care and boarding have been recruited and appointed following careful questioning and scrutiny of applications, to include references, interview questioning and Enhanced DBS and other checks. Boarders and tutors are aware of the importance of raising or reporting Low Level Concerns, Child on Child Abuse, Whistle-Blowing, and Safeguarding and Child Protection.
16. Staffing and supervision – Duty teams of tutors and resident staff are available and around to ensure appropriate supervision; roll calls allow them to ensure pupils are always 'around and about'. Whilst tutors will not intentionally breach an individual's privacy, the duty of care requires staff 'to be present'.
17. Prefects – are chosen by the Headmaster on the advice of Heads of Houses, tutors and pupils. Induction and training ensure they understand their role is to lead, enthuse and encourage other pupils, as well as supporting the safeguarding aims and responsibilities of School, House and community.
18. Guardians – are chosen and appointed by parents, often on the advice of agents. The School requires advanced details for any pupils leaving the campus at weekends or half terms, or other such occasions, from parents or agents. The School regularly asks those who stay off-campus to evaluate the arrangements which guardians/agents have been made for them and detail their perceptions of the experiences of their time away.
19. Children's accommodation off site – there are no off-site school residences.