

***Meánscoil na mBráithre Críostaí, Cill Chainnigh***  
**Christian Brothers Secondary School, Kilkenny.**

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PASTORAL CARE POLICY May 2018

- School Name:** Christian Brothers Secondary School, Kilkenny
- School Address:** James's Street, Kilkenny
- School Details:** CBS Kilkenny is a Voluntary Roman Catholic Secondary School under the Trusteeship and the Patronage of the Edmund Rice Schools Trust. The School is grant aided by the Department of Education & Skills and is a single sex (boys) school.
- School Management:** The Board of Management of CBS Kilkenny is a statutory Board appointed pursuant to the provisions of the Education Act 1998.

## **Mission Statement**

Inspired by its founder, CBS Kilkenny aims to provide Catholic education in the Edmund Rice tradition. The school endeavours to be a caring Christian Community which promotes to the best of its ability the personal, spiritual, physical and intellectual development of its students.

## **Ethos**

As an Edmund Rice School, CBS Kilkenny seeks to promote the five key elements of an Edmund Rice School as espoused by the ERST Charter:

- Nurturing faith, Christian spirituality and Gospel-based values
- Promoting partnership in the school community
- Excelling in teaching and learning
- Creating a caring school community
- Inspiring transformational leadership.

## **Introduction**

The pastoral care policy encompasses the whole school community. Pastoral Care should permeate all areas of school life. In CBS Kilkenny we facilitate the development of all members of our school community. In our school community each individual is valued and his uniqueness is recognised. We promote a school community that is caring and positive. This work will be carried out in an environment that is both safe and secure for all in our school community. We believe Pastoral Care is the responsibility of the entire school community.

## **Relationship to school ethos/mission**

Through the implementation of the Policy we strive to enact the stated Mission, Vision and Aims of CBS Kilkenny. We value all in the school community and endeavour to develop each member of the school community.

## **Rationale for policy**

Pastoral Care is an integral part of our mission in CBS Kilkenny and as such it needs a formal structure to ensure its effectiveness in our school community on a day by day basis and particularly at critical times. In CBS Kilkenny we believe Pastoral Care permeates all aspects of school life. We welcome the new emphasis on Wellbeing, as stipulated by the Department of Education and Skills, which we feel complements our existing policy on Pastoral Care.

## **Goals of the Policy**

That every student will:

- Feel valued and cared for
- Be developed to his full potential – spiritually, morally, intellectually, physically, socially, personally and aesthetically
- Have a sense of belonging to our school community

## **Roles and responsibilities:**

The Pastoral Care Task Team has the responsibility to draft this Policy in consultation with the staff, students, parents/guardians and management of the school. The Draft Policy will then be presented to the staff, Student Council, Parents Association and Board of Management. Modifications may be made following consultation. The Pastoral Care policy will then be taken to the Board of Management for formal ratification.

## **Implementation of Policy**

### Board of Management

The Board of Management will ensure that the ethos and values of the founding partners are reflected in the formulation and implementation of this policy.

### Principal and Deputy Principal

The Principal and Deputy Principal will work to ensure that our school is primarily a

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caring community. The management is committed to supporting all those involved in the pastoral care programme in CBS Kilkenny. The management makes time available to meet parents/guardians, staff and students in a supportive atmosphere. The management facilitates in-house staff development and encourages participation in external associations, programmes and courses particularly when those programmes/courses have a direct influence on student learning.

### All School Staff

Due care and respect will form the basis of all dealings the staff may have with all members of the school community and visitors to the school.

### Chaplain

The School Chaplain is in a unique position to assist the pastoral care system within our school. The Chaplain will work with the staff in providing spiritual and ~~the~~ pastoral care to the whole school community and will communicate at all times with the Principal, Deputy Principals, the Guidance Counsellors, Year Heads, Tutors and parents/guardians on all relevant matters relating to the students.

### Class Teacher

Teachers conduct classes in a structured and ordered environment. The relationship fostered in the class is based on mutual respect. The classroom teacher deals with situations that arise in class and in more serious situations s/he refers the student to a Class Tutor, Year Head, and the Deputy Principal in accordance with the agreed school protocol.

### Critical Incident Team

The Critical Incident Team is made up of the Principal, Deputy Principal, Chaplain, Guidance Counsellor and members of staff. The team will meet on a regular basis.

### Guidance Counsellor

The Guidance Department provides a wide range of services including Educational Guidance, Personal Development/Counselling, Standardised Testing. The Guidance Counsellor is available to meet students in class groups and for individual consultation with students and/or parents/guardians on matters relating to career advice and possible personal difficulties.

### Parents Association

As a partner in CBS Kilkenny the Parents Association contributes significantly to policy making. Through their involvement in the association parents/guardians show their commitment to student welfare and development. The Parents Association contributes to various programmes in the school.

### Religious Education (RE) Teachers

The RE teachers deliver the RE Programme to all students in the school.  
Refer to Policy.

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### The Student Council – Student Council Liaison Teacher

The Student Council is a representative structure for all the students in the school. It provides students with the opportunity to become involved in the affairs of the school, working in partnership with school management, staff and parents/guardians. It should always work for the benefit of the school and its students. The Student Council will always work in consultation with the school management.

The Student Council has responsibility for:

- Working with the staff, Board of Management and Parents' Association in the school
- Communicating and consulting with all of the students in the school
- Involving as many students as possible in the activities of the Council
- Planning and managing the Council's programme of activities for the year
- Managing and accounting to the Student Council and Board of Management for any funds raised by the Council.

### Wellbeing:

A core Wellbeing team has been established in the school and meet regularly. This team comprises staff from the departments of Physical Education, CSPE, SPHE, Guidance as well as other relevant subject departments. The team aims to plan and deliver the new Wellbeing program (as outlined by the NCCA). The program is firmly based on the six indicators of learning as set out in the Junior Cycle Wellbeing guidelines. These indicators are as follows:

1. Active
2. Responsible
3. Connected
4. Resilient
5. Respected
6. Aware

The Wellbeing team will help to foster an awareness that the concept of Wellbeing is a whole school and cross-curricular responsibility.

### Learning Support/Resource Teachers

The learning support teachers support students academically as well as socially and personally to facilitate their holistic education. The work is carried out in conjunction with the mainstream teachers and in collaboration with home and external agencies.

### Special Needs Assistants

Special Needs Assistants provide care and assistance to the students allocated to their care, paying particular attention to the students' Wellbeing.

### Students

Relationships in the school will be based on respect and courtesy. Students should at all

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times be supportive to all in the school community. Students should also respect school property and the environment and take responsibility for keeping it in good order.

### Tutors

The Class Tutor takes particular care of one class group. S/he engenders a supportive, positive atmosphere in which success and achievement are highlighted and valued. S/he liaises with class teacher, parents/guardians and Year Heads on a regular basis.

### Year Heads

Year Heads play a major role in the care and support of our students. They meet on a weekly basis with the Principal and Deputy Principal. They have regular contact with parents/guardians on the progress and performance of the students. They also communicate with the Principal, Deputy Principals, Guidance Counsellors and Learning Support teachers on issues relating to the year group.

## **Pastoral Care Programmes**

The following policies/programmes will contribute to the Pastoral Care Programme in a positive and caring manner.

Child Protection Guidelines are adhered to at all times.

### Anti-Bullying Policy – Programme

The purpose of the programme is to raise the awareness of bullying and to have procedures in place to deal with incidents of bullying.

Refer to policy.

### New Students who join during the School Year

The relevant Year Head and Tutor will provide advice and assistance to new students who join CBS Kilkenny during the academic year. The Year Head and Tutors will monitor the performance and integration of the relevant students in CBS Kilkenny over the initial 4-6 week period, by consulting with the student's teachers. During this period the Year Head and/or Tutor will meet with the relevant students and enquire how they are settling in and offer support as required.

### Code of Behaviour

The Code of Behaviour is in place to facilitate learning and teaching in a positive, safe and secure atmosphere. The Code has been developed in partnership with the staff, students, parents/guardians and management.

Refer to policy.

### Critical Incident Policy

The Critical Incident policy is in place.

Refer to policy.

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### Extra-Curricular Activities – Teachers

A wide range of activities including sporting, cultural, dramatic and artistic events facilitate the personal development of students and assists the development of interpersonal and intrapersonal skills.

Refer to policy.

### Health and Safety Policy

Refer to Policy.

### Homework Policy

To promote in the student population the value of homework and study in the learning process and to promote independent learning and creativity.

Refer to policy.

### Induction Programme for First Year students

An induction programme for incoming first year students is held at the beginning of the academic year. The Year Head and Tutors advise the first year students of the code of behaviour expected in CBS Kilkenny. Timetables and maps of the school building are distributed to the new students and the Tutors conduct an orientation session with their individual classes and inform them of all aspects of school life. The Cairdeas group mentor the first years in all aspects of school life for the first term and implement programmes at lunch time for them.

### Induction Programme for New Staff

An induction programme for new staff is held at the beginning of the academic year. The Principal and Deputy Principal welcome the new staff, provide information on the ethos and philosophy of the school and inform them of various working policies and procedures operating within the school.

Refer to policy.

### Induction Programme for Parents/Guardians of incoming First Year students

The parents/guardians of the incoming First Year students are invited to the school in May for an information evening. The aim of the evening is to help the parents/guardians and incoming students with a smooth transition from primary to post-primary school. There is a follow up evening for the parents/guardians of each individual class group in October of the first year.

### Induction Programme for Parents/Guardians of Transition Year students

The Transition Year Co-Ordinator invites the parents/guardians of prospective transition year students to an information evening in May of the proceeding academic year.

### Mentoring Programme

A Mentor (senior subject department members/Subject Co-Ordinator) is assigned to each new staff member when they begin teaching in CBS Kilkenny.

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The aims of the mentoring programme are to promote:

- The care and Wellbeing of new teachers
- The development and acquisition of new teaching skills
- A collaborative teaching culture in our school.

### Positive Behaviour Programme

A positive behaviour programme is in place for all students. The focus of positive behaviour is to use incentives such as motivation, encouragement, praise and reward to improve behaviour and performance. The aim of the programme is to foster team spirit in a class group and to improve class-work, homework and behaviour. The positive behaviour programme entails collaboration among Year Heads, Class Tutors, class teachers, students, and parents/guardians.

An Awards Ceremony is organised by the whole School community and held at the end of each academic year. Awards are given for a variety of different academic achievements and extracurricular activities.

### Role of Year Heads and Tutors

To monitor attendance, academic performance and personal development.

Guidelines on the role of the Year Head and on the role of the Tutor are issued to all teachers at the beginning of the school year.

### Substance Abuse Policy

Refer to policy

### Supervised Study

A supervised study facility is available in the school every evening after school in which priority is given to those undertaking state examinations. Students study in a quiet supervised atmosphere.

### Pastoral Procedures

- Key Pastoral Care personnel meeting - Relevant Year Head and Tutors (Chaplain, Guidance Counsellor, Learning Support invited if necessary)
- Individual Counselling
- Critical Incidents – e.g. Sudden death. (see template letters at end of this policy).

### Referrals

Where allegations of a serious nature regarding child protection concerns arise, referrals are made to the appropriate agencies.

### Performance Criteria

The goals of this policy are to ensure that each student will:

- Feel valued and cared for

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- Be developed to his full potential – spiritually, morally intellectually, physically, socially, personally and aesthetically
- Have a sense of belonging in our school community.

### **Monitoring the Implementation of this Policy**

The monitoring and implementation of this policy will keep in mind that Pastoral Care should permeate all areas of school life.

- Tutors/Year Heads/Guidance Counsellor will meet with class group/year group regularly to monitor the pastoral care needs of students.
- Year Head meeting with Principal and Deputy Principal will monitor Pastoral Care on a regular basis.
- Teachers will discuss academic and pastoral development of each student at Parent/Teacher Meetings.
- The Pastoral Care Team (Principal, Deputy Principal, Year Heads, Chaplain, Guidance Counsellor, Wellbeing team and other members of staff) will meet regularly to monitor the Policy.

### **Approval**

This policy has been approved by CBS Kilkenny Board of Management.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Chairperson, Board of Management

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

## **TEMPLATE LETTER TO PARENTS/GUARDIANS - VIOLENT DEATH**

Dear Parents,

I need to inform you about a very sad event that has happened.  
(Give accurate information about the incident, but avoid using the word murder as this will not be established until the court case is completed).

A child/young person from the neighbourhood, who is the brother of \_\_\_\_\_, a student here at school, was killed as a result of (a violent incident in the street etc.) earlier this week. We are all profoundly saddened by his death.

We have shared this information and have had discussions with all of our students so that they know what has happened. School staff members have been available for students on an on-going basis today. Other support personnel (including psychologists etc., according to actual arrangements) are available to advise staff and, where necessary, to talk to students. This support will continue to be available for (if appropriate insert how long).

The death of any young person is tragic, but a violent death is even more difficult. It is hard to have to teach our children about the violence in our world and to accept that sometimes we do not have the power to prevent it.

This death may cause a variety of reactions in your child. Some children/young people may be afraid for their own life and for the lives of those they love. Take time to listen to their fears and reassure them that what has happened is rare.

We have enclosed some additional information that may be useful during this time.

The media are in the vicinity of the school and may approach you or your children. You need to respond to their questions if you are approached. We will not allow the media to interview your child at school and our general advice is that you should not let your children be interviewed. They are not mature enough to judge what to say and may say something they will regret later.

(If planned) A support meeting for parents/guardians is planned for (date, time and place). At that time we can talk further about how to help ourselves and our children. Our thoughts are with (family name) and with each of you.

Sincerely,

Principal's Name.

## **TEMPLATE ANNOUNCEMENT TO THE MEDIA**

This can be used as a template by schools to be emailed, faxed or given to the media. It may help to decrease the number of media calls and callers to the school.

In some instances it is not appropriate to provide names or information that might identify individuals.

This announcement will need to be changed based upon confidentiality issues, the wishes of the victim's family and the nature of the incident.

My name is (Name) and I am the Principal of (Name) School. We learned this morning of the death of (one of students or Name of Student). This is a terrible tragedy for \_\_\_\_\_ family(ies), our school and our community. We are deeply saddened by these events. Our sympathy and thoughts are with (Name) family and friends.

Name of student/students was a (5<sup>th</sup> Year boy) and will be greatly missed by all who knew him. We have been in contact with his/her parents/guardians and they have requested that we all understand their need for privacy at this difficult time.

Offers of support have been pouring in and are greatly appreciated. Our school have implemented our Critical Incident Management Plan.

Psychologists from the National Educational Psychological Services (NEPS) and (insert other information if relevant) have been with us all day supporting and advising teachers in their efforts to assist our students at this time.

The teachers have been helping students to deal with the tragic event. The school has been open to parents, to support them and to offer them advice and guidance. We would ask you to respect our privacy at this time.

Thank you.

## **SAMPLE CONSENT LETTER TO PARENTS/GUARDIANS**

Dear Parents,

Following the recent (tragedy, death of X) we have arranged professional support for students in school who need particular help. (X.....) is available to help us with this work. This support will usually consist of talking to children, either in small groups or on a one-to-one basis and offering reassurance and advice as appropriate.

Your son has been identified as one of the students who would benefit from meeting with the psychologist. If you would like your child to receive this support please sign the attached permission slip and return it to the school by \_\_\_\_\_

If you would like further information on the above or to talk to the psychologist, please indicate this on the slip or telephone the school.

Yours sincerely,

\_\_\_\_\_

I/We consent to having our son met by a psychologist employed by the Minister for Education & Skills.

I/We understand that my son may meet the psychologist(s) in an individual or group session depending on the arrangements which are thought to be most appropriate.

Name of Student: \_\_\_\_\_

Class/Year: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

I would like my son \_\_\_\_\_ to avail of the support being offered by the psychologist.

SIGNED: \_\_\_\_\_(Parent/Guardian)

## **TEMPLATE LETTER TO PARENTS/GUARDIANS- SUDDEN DEATH/ACCIDENT**

Dear Parents,

The school has experienced (the sudden death, accidental injury etc.) of .....  
We are deeply saddened by the death/events.

(Brief details of the incident, and in the event of a death, perhaps some positive remembrances of the person lost).

Our thoughts are with (family name).

We have support structures in place to help your child cope with this tragedy. (Elaborate).

It is possible that your child may have some feelings and questions that he may like to discuss with you. It is important to give factual information that is appropriate to their age.

You can help your child by taking time to listen and by encouraging them to express their feelings. All children are different and will express their feelings in different ways. It is not uncommon for children to have difficulty concentrating or to be fearful, anxious, or irritable. They may become withdrawn, cry complain of physical aches and pains, have difficulty sleeping or have nightmares. Some may not want to eat. These are generally short term reactions. Over the course of the days to come, please keep an eye on your child and allow him to express their feelings without criticism.

Although classes will continue as usual, I anticipate that the next few days will be difficult for everyone.

(OPTIONAL) An information night for parents/guardians is planned for (date, time and place). At that time, further information about how to help children in grief will be given.

We have enclosed some information which you may find useful in helping your child through this difficult time.

If you would like advice you may contact the following people at the school.  
(Details).

Principal's Signature: