

## **Student Support Team Policy**

**The Student Support Team is a shared pastoral approach to care management within the school.**

The aim of the Student Support Team is to identify students who may be experiencing particular difficulties both inside and outside of school. The Student Support Team strives to develop and implement care strategies/interventions which will work to alleviate their difficulties.

### **Rationale**

- Consistency of approach to care needs.
- Connection to school ethos.
- Supports teachers.
- Support individual and groups of students.
- Shared responsibility and response.
- Team Support.
- Information management.
- Sharing of skills and information.
- Understanding of roles.
- Emotional differentiation.
- Good practice.
- Follow up – next meeting.

### **Membership**

- Principal
- Deputy Principals
- Chaplain
- Guidance Counsellors.
- SEN co-ordinator.
- Year Heads on a rota basis.
- SNA's, NYP co-ordinator, NEPS Psychologist as need arises.
- Home, School, Community liaison Officer

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## **Student Support Team Issues**

- Attendance/ Retention.
- Behaviour.
- Academic Achievement.
- Pastoral Care.
- Supports.
- Health/Welfare.
- Strengths/ Weaknesses.
- Needs of School.
- Family Issues.
- Mental Health.
- Child Protection.
- Critical Incident.
- Staff Support/Development.
- In/ Out Weekly List.
- Evaluation.

## **Practice & Procedures**

- Weekly Timetabled meetings.
- Agenda.
- Professionalism/ Confidentiality.
- Leadership.
- Effective use of time/structure/ resources.
- Openness.
- Sharing relevant information with wider staff.
- Record keeping.

## **In and Out Lists**

- Students needing extra support are discussed and support structures are decided. These students are listed on a weekly basis as needing extra care.
- Linking staff/school to emotional/mental needs of students.
- Care Management.
- Emotional space for the student.
- Case management and referral notes.
- All staff have access to laminated cards outlining the response if a student is listed on the IN or OUT list. These are available on the Pastoral Care noticeboard in the staffroom.
- A list is posted weekly on a colour coded sheet every Wednesday on the main Notice board in the staffroom for the attention of teaching staff/SNA's.

The In/Out Communication System is a great way to communicate in a busy school about students who may be going through a difficult time.

### **IN**

Students on the IN (aka Focus in) list are deemed to benefit from a little extra attention, encouragement and support.

Teachers keep an extra watchful eye on these students to communicate visibility, attention and care as well as watching for signs of distress, deterioration or changes in behaviour. Teachers can help this student to feel connected and supported by intentionally using their name, making eye contact, reducing isolation by organising paired work, being positive in tone and language and giving them words of encouragement. Keep a close presence and reflect with empathy.

### **OUT**

Students on the OUT (aka Focus out) list are also going through a difficult time. Due to a number of factors, they may benefit from space and tactical ignoring. Some students when disturbed or overwhelmed default into anger which makes them feel more powerful. They are very likely to trigger and act out if they feel hurt, challenged, confronted or misunderstood.

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## **The Student Support Team and Other School Systems**

### Pastoral Care and the Student Support Team

All members of staff have a significant role to play in modelling the importance of building and maintaining relationships grounded in mutual respect, dignity, fairness, reconciliation, restoration, compassion and justice. All staff members need to be known as caring, compassionate adults who take a genuine interest in the lives of their students and who set appropriate boundaries within those teacher-student relationships. A Restorative Justice Approach is implemented at all times for conflict resolution in school. The Co-ordinators of Pastoral Care Programme and the implementation of the programme is the privilege of Senior Management and the School Chaplain. Their role generally, is one of co-ordination. The Student Support Team supports them in this role.

### Critical Incidents and the Student Support Team

The school's Critical Incident Management Team is represented by all members of the Student Support Team. In the case of a critical incident, the role of this group is to co-ordinate the various aspects of the response required.

### Child Protection and the Student Support Team

The Designated Liaison Person (DLP) who is normally the Principal, has responsibility for ensuring that the reporting requirements for alleged child protection concerns outlined in the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools (2017) are followed correctly and promptly. The DLP is supported by a deputy/deputies DLP. However, each member of the school community, including the board of management, shares the responsibility for implementation of the procedures. Given that alleged child protection concerns can be raised in the context of student support team meetings, it is particularly important that members of the student support team have a clear understanding of the Child Protection procedures and their roles in relation to this.

### The Schools Behaviour Support System and the Student Support Team

The student support team has strong links with the behaviour support system of the school and can initiate preventative programmes for addressing issues that arise. However, the student support team is not responsible for disciplinary action following inappropriate behaviour of students but should be informed and aware of the school's Code of Conduct and relevant policies.

### School Guidance and the Student Support Team

The school guidance plan describes the school guidance programme and specifies how the guidance needs of all students are to be addressed. The guidance counsellors are members of the student support team which have a remit for whole school wellbeing promotion at Junior and Senior Cycle.

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The school can draw on the expertise of the Guidance Counsellors in planning, coordinating and delivering guidance related learning associated with wellbeing promotion in the whole school.

Signed:

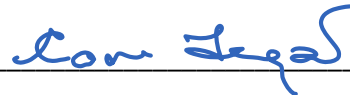
  
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Chairperson

Date 8/4/2022

Review Date 2025

Signed:

  
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Principal

Date 8/4/2022