

Whole School Pastoral Care Policy (includes EYFS) – Principles and Practice

Hall Grove School is a community founded expressly for the education of children in their most formative years. All such establishments have manifold responsibilities: developing the pupils' skills, knowledge and physique, helping them to discover their innate talents, to strengthen their weaknesses and to guide them towards confident and balanced relationships with the human and natural world. The children are encouraged to develop an awareness of and respect for different races, beliefs, cultures and people with disabilities. Children have the chance to explore these, as well as moral and environmental issues, within a range of lessons such as RS, PSHE, Science and Geography. Furthermore, entwined with the lives of the children are those of their families and of those who work in the School: their influence on the growing child will vary from one individual to another and thus will be truly incalculable. Amid these many influences, it is the function of Pastoral Care to observe the individual and to help the child to make informed decisions which have a positive influence on their school life and help keep them safe and secure.

For much of a child's early career in education, the Form Tutor, the Head of Pastoral Care, Head of Boarding or School Nurse will mainly be answering simple practical questions. Few, however, are lucky enough to avoid all forms of problem: then the pupil and parents/guardians will need sympathetic support and as much guidance as the School is competent to offer. A broad range of experience and knowledge in a school are the best provision for the differing needs and personalities of its pupils as long as each is the assigned responsibility of one willing and capable adult, supported by an effective management structure. That is the principle followed at Hall Grove.

In the Pre-School to Year 5, the children are managed mainly by their Form Teachers, who will be able to answer most enquiries; they may refer parents to specialist departments for particular issues. From Year 6 onwards, the Form Tutor is the best first point of contact. The Head of Pastoral Care/Head of Girls, supported by the School Nurses, are the senior members of Staff responsible to the Headmaster for Pastoral Care at Hall Grove. Children can talk to them in private and this may help them to resolve their own difficulties by expressing them. Boarders have the added benefit of informal contact with the Head of Boarding and the resident Staff after the working day is over. The Heads of Pastoral Care/Head of Girls are available to provide colleagues and parents with a second opinion or an over-view when problems become complicated. Individual pupils' problems can also be considered at the regular Section meetings if it will be helpful. The Headmaster takes final responsibility in this as in every part of School life and is the DSL, supported by the Deputy Headmaster/Head of Pastoral Care/School Nurses, who are all DDSLs, responsible for the legal duties of Child Protection/Safeguarding.

Guidelines for Staff:

- *listen - to the stories of all involved*
- *do not act in haste*
- *detachment is helpful, not heartless*
- *do not conduct a public investigation unless it is clearly necessary*
- *respect a confidence but not at the expense of anyone's health or safety*
- *if in doubt or in any serious case, seek a second opinion*
- *in any case potentially involving a Safeguarding issue, refer at once to one of the Designated Safeguarding Leads or the Local Authority Designated Officer (see Safeguarding policy)*
- *keep parents informed*
- *many of the storms of childhood can be weathered with firm but kindly guidance and belief in the possibility of a happy ending.*

updated September 2018