

HOLY FAMILY PRIMARY SCHOOL
MAGHERAFELT



**PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT & MUTUAL
UNDERSTANDING
POLICY [PDMU]**

Personal Development and Mutual Understanding

Rationale.

All aspects of a child's experience at home, school and as members of their community contribute to Personal & Social Development and Mutual Understanding (PDMU). PDMU is fundamental to the development of the whole child.

Aims.

1. To have an appropriately positive regard for self and others and their needs.
2. To develop life skills to enable them to participate effectively and safely in society.
3. To identify, review and evaluate the values they and society hold.
4. To take increasing responsibility for their own lives.

The achievement of these aims requires pupils to increase their knowledge and understanding about themselves, others and their immediate environment and the world in which they live. They will need to learn and practice processes and skills which will enable them to achieve the following:

- Look after their personal needs
- Work independently
- Participate effectively in groups
- Make their own decisions
- Assess their own abilities and capabilities

Children are greatly influenced by society's values – the values which are communicated explicitly or implicitly in school and by the values held at home. Maintaining a close partnership with parents is fundamental to the task of promoting PDMU. Values such as honesty, justice, fairness and respect for self and others must always remain at the forefront of all teaching and learning.

Whole School Approach.

This is based on a warm, caring, supportive atmosphere within our school in which all pupils, staff and parents know they are valued.

Our supportive school atmosphere should take account of such things as :

- The pupils as individuals
- Good communications
- Pastoral needs
- Multi cultural education
- Positive achievements
- Views of all members/denominations of the school community
- Anti-Racist Education

Cross Curricular Approach.

Each area of the curriculum has a contribution to make to PDMU. In Holy Family, all staff is able to utilise whichever curricular areas are appropriate to promote the following:

- Develop positive attitudes towards themselves and others and cope with emotions and a variety of experiences.
- Develop tolerance, respect and a willingness to co-operate and share with others
- Develop skills in working independently and taking responsibility for their own learning.
- Develop the confidence to show initiative and imagination.

Self-Awareness / Personal Development.

Our children will be assisted to reflect on how their actions are influenced by values, attitudes and past experiences. They will be encouraged to apply this knowledge in future situations.

As self-awareness and the ability to engage in self-assessment increases, pupils will be led to reflect on their achievements, goals and personalities and how these affect their personal development.

Our children will be helped to realise that, just as they grow and change physically, so too will they grow and change emotionally. This is important at all stages but particularly so when pupils are attempting to cope with puberty and the development of their sexuality.

Self-esteem / Personal Development.

High self-esteem is crucial if children are to benefit fully from the variety of experiences offered throughout the curriculum.

In school children will be provided with opportunities to experience success in a variety of contexts, such as:

- Being a messenger
- Handing out resources
- Escorting visitors around the school
- Displaying presentations of work
- Negotiating Class and School Rules
- Monitoring
- Assisting on trips
- Being a Playground Pal (P7)
- Being a member of the School Council (P7)

We actively encourage that every child has a positive contribution to make and will use all areas of the curriculum to enhance the self-esteem of all our children.

Inter-Personal Relationships/Social Development.

There are many opportunities in our school for the development of pupils' skill in relationships. We will strive to assist pupils to recognise these skills and to further develop them. This involves paying attention to roles, interaction, values, communication and behaviour in all situations. Much of this will be achieved by creating a class and school ethos in which pupils and adults are expected to treat each other with mutual respect and consideration.

Themes such as the following lend themselves to furthering inter-personal relationships:

- People who help us
- My Friends
- My Family
- My Community
- Our City
- Our World
- When Gran was a girl
- Life in the recent past
- Life in the ancient past

Within this area we will also focus on the following:

- Making, maintaining, mending and ending relationships
- Communicating needs to others
- Listening and responding to the needs of others
- Communicating own ideas
- Respecting the views of others
- Maintaining stances
- Challenging and Confronting

Independence & Inter-Dependence/ Social Development

Growing up involves an increasing awareness and recognition of dependence, independence and inter-dependence. Recognising when it is appropriate to act in these ways is a sign of maturity.

At every stage staff will encourage pupils to act with increasing independence and provide opportunities for them to do so. At the same time the school will assist the children to recognise that increased responsibility goes with increased independence. Children have to learn that when they have freedom to choose and make decisions that they have to accept responsibility for that choice and the ensuing consequences.

We foster an attitude of viewing problems as learning opportunities for the children. We will present children with challenges which stimulate creativity, collaboration and innovativeness. We will take all opportunities to highlight that while acting independently and living in society sometimes it is necessary to make concessions to enable others to achieve their goals.

Examples of pupils' potential development are:

- Carrying out a range of tasks on their own or in a group.
- Discuss more than one strategy for coping with or tackling problems
- Asking for advice and independently acting on it
- Showing ability to set realistic goals for self and others
- Accepting that others' needs may be more important than their own
- Demonstrating their ability to select from an ever increasing range of choices and discussing the reason for the choices made
- Taking increasing responsibility for their own actions
- Pupils being encouraged to extend their thinking through addressing questions related to areas such as peer or media pressure and cultural influences

Assessment, Recording and Reporting.

Assessment is an integral part of the learning and teaching process. It allows the teacher to plan the next stage. Assessment and recording will take account of the current strengths and development needs of the children. Using observational, written and verbal responses from our children we will be able to comment, in our annual report to parents, on the development of children in the context of the following:

- Self-awareness
- Self-esteem
- Inter-Personal relationships
- Independence and inter-dependence

In addition to the daily work ongoing in the class rooms, the children, at all stages, will participate in weekly assemblies which have Religious Education and Personal & Social Development themes. These are taken by class teachers.