



Pastoral Care Policy

Introduction:

English in Chester aims to provide pastoral care to all students. Pastoral care is an all-embracing term which describes the atmosphere and ethos of English in Chester in its mission to promote students' personal development, and foster positive attitudes throughout the school. At English in Chester we believe that pastoral care is central to our students' academic achievement and that if our students are physically and emotionally healthy they are better able to achieve their potential.

Aims

Pastoral care at English in Chester encompasses the whole life and work of the school in which:

- there is an atmosphere that is conducive to learning, based on respect, consideration, cultural awareness and tolerance.
- there is effective communication between all staff regarding student welfare.
- all students feel safe and secure.
- there are good relationships between teachers and students and among students within and outside the classroom.
- the students' worries and concerns are dealt with sympathetically and appropriately.
- the school has clear lines of communication with ETO's, hosts and parents/guardians.
- the school strives to promote and sustain good and high standards of behaviour and attendance and disciplinary procedures are implemented consistently in a fair and positive manner.

Roles and responsibilities

While the Principal and Student Services Manager (SSM) have primary responsibility for the arrangements that promote and ensure the care and welfare of students, pastoral care in the school is also a shared responsibility, involving the whole staff in cooperation with Hosts and ETOs. All members of staff have the support of the Principal and SSM in matters of pastoral care.

Principal - provides leadership and management, ensuring that whole school systems and policies are in place to manage pastoral care issues. Additionally coordinates with the SSM when appropriate.

Student Services Manager - the main point of contact for pastoral issues and has responsibility for recording individual concerns and liaising with ETOs and homestay hosts. The SSM also has responsibility for monitoring and developing systems which manage and promote pastoral care in the school.

Student Services Team - assist in pastoral issues and record issues in absence of SSM

Academic Manager - coordinates with the SSM, in liaison with teaching staff when appropriate.

Teaching Team - responsible for highlighting any pastoral issues to the SSM/Academic Manager.

Homestay Hosts - responsible for caring for their students and sharing any individual worries or concerns they have with the SSM.



Provision and Practice

Some of the principal features of pastoral care provision and practice in the school are set out under the following headings.

1. Open door policy

The School makes an effort to promote the approachability of all staff members to students. All students on every course are informed about the 'open door' policy in the school and are informed on their first day that they can speak to any member of staff for help or assistance. They are given a handbook on their first day with staff details in it. Students staying in residential accommodation are also given a student handbook with more contact details specific to them. All students are taken on a tour of the school on and introduced to staff members, including the SSM. There is also 'Here to help' signage with photos throughout the school, including on the school screens and welfare notice board to make students aware of who staff are and let them know they can be approached for help at any time. Staff always wear name and photo lanyards making them easily recognisable to students.

2. Positive classroom climate:

Teachers ensure that:

- the classroom is calm and comfortable
- there is an interest in the students individually
- all contributions are respected
- there is mutual respect between teachers and students
- there is sensitivity to both the academic and cultural needs of the students
- discipline is fair and consistent

3. Structured welfare support

On their first day at school, students have a speaking test in which the Academic Management Team or Teaching Team checks that students are happy with their accommodation. This is also an opportunity for students to raise any other welfare issues. Any concerns raised here are passed on to the SSM.

All students under 18 on General English courses are met on their first day by the Principal/Student Services Manager, and are made aware of the support available to them.

General English students have monthly tutorials with their class tutor in which welfare issues can be raised. Long term students (12+ weeks) have quarterly meetings with the Academic Management Team where they are given an opportunity to discuss any issues or concerns they may have.

At the end of the first week, all General English and 25+ students are given a week one questionnaire and are asked how they feel about their experience so far. This is seen, actioned, and recorded by relevant staff members.

Students on the Summer Course for Teens are spoken to on their first day to check that they are happy in their homestays. If they have forgotten to bring anything with them or need something, activity leaders take them to town in the afternoon. In the day 1 quiz, they are asked if they know who to contact for different issues. Students also watch a video about bullying (made by our students) on their first day and are told who to contact if they encounter any issues. Everyday Teachers talk about how all students are doing and any issues are raised are passed on to the Course Directors. In Activity Assistant meetings, any concerns are also raised and if necessary followed up by Course Managers. On Thursdays all new students are given a week 1 questionnaire which are seen, followed up and signed off by Teachers, and both Course Managers. Friday Teacher's meeting includes a check to see if there are any concerns.



4. Staff training and development

There are many opportunities for staff to train and update their training in pastoral care related areas. There are several trained staff members, qualified to safeguard and care for students under 18's. The Principal and SSM are the Level 3 Designated Safeguarding Leads in the School, and several other staff members are trained to Level 2. The SSM and Administration Assistant have English UK training in student welfare. Several members of staff are trained in First Aid and the SSM is also trained in Mental Health First Aid. There is regular in house training for all staff in safeguarding and emergency phone training.

5. Partnership with hosts.

English in Chester believes that hosts are vital partners in providing the best possible pastoral support for students. The school keeps in close contact with hosts regarding student welfare. Hosts are informed of the 'open door policy' that exists for them to discuss any concerns about their students at any time. The SSM is in regular phone and email contact with all hosts so that in the event of a pastoral issue, hosts feel comfortable communicating their concerns and feel supported in their role. The SSM regularly updates hosts on pastoral issues through newsletters and safeguarding bulletins. Hosts are also provided with a detailed handbook which details their welfare role.

6. Social opportunities.

This feature of pastoral care refers to the opportunities the school provides for learning and social activity outside the classroom. On some courses (Summer Courses for Teenagers and 50+ Courses) there is an inclusive social programme devised with the interests of these age groups in mind. For our other students we provide an optional, full and varied social programme. The school has a diverse social programme which not only provides students with the opportunity to learn and socialise with each other but also with the wider community in Chester. Our 'Meet the British' programme provides opportunities for students to meet with and get involved in the local community whilst practising their English. Efforts are also made to link lessons with the local environment and community.

7. Student representation

Student Representatives are assigned to help new students settle in to the school. They take part in inductions so that new students know who they are. They are available to offer support to students and pass on any issues or suggestions they have to relevant school staff. The Social Programmes Organiser also arranges regular focus groups with students on a variety of issues and actions are taken to address student opinions/concerns as appropriate.

8. Cultural awareness and appreciation

The school provides information on cultural awareness to homestay hosts in the homestay handbook. The school also provides country specific fact sheets on demand. Opportunities for students to celebrate their festivals/celebrations from their native countries are promoted and supported in the school. Students are provided with a room where they can pray in the school.

9. Medical and Health

Students are asked for medical and health information on their application form and also on the parental consent form for students under 18 years old. There is a system in the school for communicating important medical information to relevant staff/hosts. All administration staff can help students with making GP/Dentist appointments and all students are asked if they require a staff member to accompany them on appointments. It is mandatory for staff to accompany all students under 18 on medical appointments. If students are not well and need to be absent, they are asked to phone the school. Students under 18, with minor ailments are not authorised to stay at home without a host to supervise them. Students are asked to come to the school and are provided with a comfortable place to rest with blankets and regular staff supervision.

10. Record keeping and administration



Record keeping and administration information is kept for every student on the Class system. Staff record any issues and actions related to pastoral matters on class notes under the heading of 'Issues'. Issues for students under 18 are record on the safeguarding and child protection log and a note is also added to the class notes that a safeguarding issues has been logged for the student.

11. Other supporting policies

The strength of the school's pastoral care provision is largely due to how English in Chester implements other supporting policies. These include:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding
- Prevent
- Equality, Relationships, Harassment and Abuse
- Teaching, Learning and Tutorial
- Attendance & Punctuality
- Health and Safety
- Discipline and Exclusions
- First Aid
- Admission and Support of vulnerable and disabled students.

Monitoring and review

Welfare is part of the agenda for all admin and teacher meetings in the school. This provides an opportunity for all staff to address any pastoral concerns or raise any issues around systems we have for managing them. All logged safeguarding issues are reviewed between by the safeguarding team annually and systems are also reviewed here.

The Principal and SSM annually review this policy document is annually reviewed and amended as appropriate in accordance with changes to the statutory requirements, British Council requirements, the findings of inspections, and any internal or external recommendations staff, student representatives and hosts.

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