St Bronagh's P.S. Personal Development Policy

Date approved by Board of Governors: Spring 2026
Review Date: Spring 2029

Rationale
St Bronagh's Primary School recognises that young people live in a period of rapid and often dramatic social, economic, and technological change. In this climate our pupils should ideally develop intra-personally and inter-personally through the role models of significant adults in their lives. As a result, they will automatically become more emotionally intelligent and witness the importance of having the right values and practices in the employment of life skills. However, in the absence of this, a taught curriculum is required in which teachers will act as facilitators providing young people with the knowledge and opportunity to practice vital life skills.

Aims
In line with our ethos and values it is our view that the personal development of our pupils is as important as their academic development. We believe that the holistic approach to development on all levels produces well rounded "whole" people equipped with the skills to deal with life. In recognition of this, when delivering the personal development programmes, we focus on the development of skills and values centred firmly on the person.

In addition, we recognise that this school is a centre of education and therefore they must accept the validity of a personal development approach to the delivery of the curriculum rather than a service driven direction.

Objectives
Through the delivery of the Personal Development and Mutual Understanding (PDMU) programme our pupils should be able to:

- Develop skills, attitudes, values, and abilities which will enable them to be effective in a variety of adult situations and occupations.
- Develop knowledge and understanding of themselves and others as individuals – their strengths and limitations, abilities, skills, personal qualities, potential, needs, attitudes, and values.
- Develop independence of mind and take responsibility for their own decisions and actions.
- Develop self-reliance, self-discipline, self-respect, and self-esteem.
- Adopt an enterprising and persistent approach to tasks and challenges.
- Develop a respect for ways of life, opinions, and ideas different from their own, provided these are based on consideration and respect for others.
- Develop a concern for, and a readiness to act on behalf of, the legitimate interests of others who cannot effectively so act themselves.
- Develop knowledge and understanding of the world in which they live and of employment and other opportunities that are available.
- Gain a concern for conservation of the natural world and for the physical, including the built environment.
- Become effective independent learners.

Methodology
In recognition of the fact that we all learn in different ways, a range of learning styles and teaching strategies will be employed related to active/experiential learning. These approaches will emphasise group and collaborative strategies, maximising opportunities for pupil input, decision-making and problem-solving.

Lessons will be conducted in a non-judgemental atmosphere with the teacher in the role of the facilitator, creating and maintaining a safe and secure environment. Empathetic relationships based on mutual respect will be developed to create a place where fears and concerns can be expressed openly without risk of ridicule or reproach.

The delivery of lessons will be concerned with the systematic and purposeful development of the whole person with emphasis on the active involvement of pupils in the learning process.

In line with our commitment to giving PDMU equal status with other subjects, each pupil will have access to a minimum of one hour per week through cross curricular approaches, circle time, assemblies, special events etc. Many aspects of the PDMU curriculum will be developed through our delivery of the PATHS Programme, supported by Barnardo's staff.

Managing External Agencies
We acknowledge the importance of ensuring that any external agencies used to support our delivery of PDMU must adhere to the values and ethos particular to St Bronagh's Primary School. We are also aware of the importance of a contract being agreed upon by all contributory parties.

Monitoring and Evaluation
This school recognises and accepts the importance of monitoring and evaluating the delivery of the PDMU curriculum. Therefore, we will carry out evaluations at appropriate intervals to determine ways of improving the quality of provision for the benefit of all pupils and staff.

Related school policies
This policy is also set within the broader school context of Pastoral Care and as such should be read in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Pastoral Care Policy.
- Child Protection Policy.
- Misuse of Drugs/Substances Policy.
- Anti-Bullying Policy.
- Intimate Care Policy.
- Breaktime and Lunchtime Policy.
- Health and Safety Policy.
- Positive Behaviour Policy.
- Pupil Attendance Policy.
- E-Safety Policy.

Shared Education
Our school is actively participating in a Shared Education programme with the pupils and staff from Dromore Road Primary School, Warrenpoint.

The Role of Governors
The Board of Governors endorse this policy and with the principal will review its effectiveness. They will ensure that the policy is administered fairly and consistently.