



# Barkisland CE VA Primary School Pastoral Support and Wellbeing Guide for Parents and Carers

## Introduction

At Barkisland CE VA Primary School, we recognise the vital importance of supporting the overall wellbeing and mental health of our pupils. This is a critical factor in ensuring that all pupils can be happy and successful across all areas of school life.

To ensure our children receive the necessary care and guidance, all members of our staff are committed to providing pastoral support, with Mrs Young serving as our dedicated Pastoral Support Worker. This guide outlines the responsibilities and processes involved in accessing pastoral support at our school, tailored specifically for our parent community.

## Pastoral Support at Barkisland CE VA Primary School

While Mrs Young is our designated Pastoral Support Worker, all staff at Barkisland CE VA Primary School are dedicated to supporting the emotional, social, and mental health needs of our pupils. Our teachers, support staff, and school leadership team work collaboratively to ensure a comprehensive approach to pastoral care.

The key responsibilities of our Pastoral Support Team include:

- Offering a compassionate and non-judgmental listening ear to pupils experiencing difficulties, whether at school or at home, such as bereavements, friendship issues, parental separation, anxieties and worries about exams or tests
- Providing one-on-one sessions to address a range of issues, such as family problems, navigating friendships, anxiety, or learning challenges
- Facilitating group activities and workshops to help children develop essential social and emotional skills, including strategies for managing exam stress and navigating friendships.
- Liaising with external agencies and specialists to ensure pupils receive the appropriate support, if necessary
- Collaborating with the school leadership team to implement a whole-school approach to supporting children's wellbeing, including Inclusion and Special Education needs and Disabilities (SEND)

We also work in partnership with local Mental Health Support Teams (MHST) where we have access to a range of support services and a regular practitioner in school to work directly with children and families (where appropriate) and offering timely support, advice and interventions where needed.

## Accessing Pastoral Support

Children at Barkisland CE VA Primary School are encouraged to approach any member of staff if they feel they need support. Our staff members have an open-door policy and children can request to speak with them whenever they feel the need. Mrs Young is our Pastoral Support Worker and as she is non-classed based, she is often more readily available to pupils or families when needed. Mrs Young will often be around during playtimes, lunchtimes and in the dining hall so that pupils can speak to her if needed. This also supports more incidental conversations or 'check ins' with pupils.

In some cases, school may reach out to parents if they believe it is necessary to share information or provide additional support. This will only occur if the staff member deems it to be in the best interest of



the child and in line with our school's safeguarding and child protection policies. It is important that children have a safe space to speak out and seek advice and guidance.

## **Confidentiality and Safeguarding**

Our Pastoral Support Team maintains strict confidentiality when working with pupils, except in cases where there are safeguarding concerns. If a staff member has any worries about a child's safety or wellbeing, they will share this information with the designated safeguarding lead and other relevant agencies as per our school's safeguarding and child protection policies. The staff member will always strive to involve the child in the process and obtain their consent before sharing any information, unless there is an immediate risk to the child's safety.

Part of the process of supporting pupils could be to offer strategies for the pupil to be able to independently speak to their parents or carers sharing their concerns or working with the pupil and parents together.

We would always seek parental consent if any specific interventions e.g from the MHST or longer-term work was deemed necessary.

## **Supporting Your Child**

As a parent, you can support your child's wellbeing by:

- Encouraging them to speak to a member of staff if they are experiencing difficulties or concerns.
- Acknowledge their concerns and help to support as needed
- Maintaining open communication with the school and the Pastoral Support Team
- Providing the school with any relevant information that may help them support your child
- Implementing any recommendations or strategies suggested by the school at home

## **Conclusion**

The Pastoral Support Team at Barkisland CE VA Primary School is dedicated to ensuring the emotional, social, and mental wellbeing of all our pupils, especially during times of academic pressure. By working together with parents and following the school's safeguarding and child protection policies, our staff can help children navigate the challenges they may face and thrive in their educational journey.