



# ALTRINCHAM GRAMMAR SCHOOL FOR BOYS

## PASTORAL CARE POLICY 2021

**Nominated Lead Member of Staff:**

**HM**

**Next Review Date:**

**September 2023**

### Underlying Principles

- 1 An effective Pastoral Policy is fundamental to the successful implementation of the aims of the School. The purpose of pastoral care at Altrincham Grammar School for Boys is to provide the necessary **support, guidance and discipline** which will enable each pupil to make the most of his potential, to show respect for others, to feel secure within the school community and confident to speak openly if he does not, and to know and understand the boundaries of acceptable behaviour (see **Appendix A 'AGSB Community Code of Conduct'**)

At AGSB we are mindful of the strong tradition of the School as a close-knit community, where the working atmosphere is enhanced greatly by the friendly and open relationships between pupils and teachers. The continuation of that tradition must not be assumed but must be worked for. Our aim is to have in place a pastoral system in which all members of staff and pupils recognise their pastoral responsibilities, pupils are known by staff as individuals, pastoral care is proactive as well as reactive and pupils are actively praised and encouraged to become involved in the procedures of the School.

The quality of the provision of pastoral care must be maintained throughout the School so that pupils have an opportunity to develop within a framework which is both consistent and fair. Communication of our values should be clear and consistent both within the school and when working in partnership with parents and guardians – whose contribution and support we will always value.

On occasion pastoral care needs to be demanding of pupils. We do not subscribe to systems that in the long run promote dependency for we wish to encourage autonomy. Nor will we be tolerant of those who threaten the fundamental principles of respect for persons and property.

Please note that the term 'Parents' as used within the policy, encompasses both Parents and Guardians.

## 2. The Structure of Pastoral Care at AGSB

### (i) **The foundation of pastoral support is the Form Tutor.**

The Form Tutor is the first point of reference for pupils, parents & subject teachers with concerns about all matters including:

- Behaviour & discipline
- Pupil Welfare
- Pupils' teachers
- Dress and appearance of pupils
- Attendance/punctuality

The Form Tutor has day-to-day responsibility for his or her form group. Over the course of a school year (and in some cases 2 to 3 school years) the Form Tutor will come to know the personalities, characters and aspirations of those pupils better than any other member of staff. Form Tutors will deal with the full range of issues that arise within the tutor group, communicate with parents and maintain the records of significant development for each pupil. They are in constant contact with their Head of Year who will work with the Form Tutors to provide support, help resolve issues etc., as appropriate.

Form Tutors meet with their form every day and on at least two occasions a week will have a 20 minute period to focus on pastoral issues. These may include:

- Holding a structured discussion on the school's 'Thought for the Week'
- Discussing with individual pupils, matters relevant either to academic or personal progress.
- Congratulating and rewarding individual pupils for excellent effort or standards of work, both in and out of school.
- Ensuring that pupils' uniform and appearance is in accordance with the School's policy

Form Tutors may, at times, need to spend more time with individual pupils and their parents. Heads of Year will be informed of any such developments and may also attend the meetings in order to offer support and guidance.

### (ii) The role of the **Head of Year** focuses both on day to day issues for pupils in that year and with thinking in broader terms about the personal and academic development of each pupil. The Head of Year will ensure that there is a consistency of approach amongst the Form Tutors in his/her year and will also co-ordinate his/her approach with those of other Heads of Year in the School. Heads of Year also liaise with the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENDCO) and with the Deputy Head as appropriate, and will make use of, and disseminate to, Form Tutors' data on pupil

performance, as relevant. The Head of Year 7 works closely with primary schools to ensure that the transition between Year 6 and Year 7 is as smooth as possible for the boys.

- (iii) The Whole School Pastoral Policy is co-ordinated by the **Deputy Head Master**. He meets regularly with the Heads of Year both individually and as a team, providing guidance and support. The Deputy Head is always involved with any serious issues within the School, such as bullying, or the use of racist, homophobic or misogynistic language, fighting or theft.

### 3. The Referral System – monitoring of pupil progress.

- (i) One of the most important functions of the pastoral system is the monitoring of the academic progress of pupils. It is important to draw clear distinctions between different types of difficulties that might occur. Academic/work related concerns will initially be dealt with in a different way from matters of behaviour/discipline, pupil welfare or dress and appearance.
- (ii) For some students, their lack of progress can be the result of more specific educational circumstances and/or needs. In this instance, the Head of Year/Deputy Head may seek the advice and support of the SENDCO in seeking a possible way forward (see SENDCO Policy). Specific help may be arranged for the pupil to assist progress; for example, he may receive advice on organisational matters or he may be provided with extra subject tuition/work if the problem relates to difficulties with a specific subject. The School attaches particular importance in these cases to regular communication with parents and usually before action is taken parents will be invited to discuss the situation and the proposed remedies with School.
- (iii) **Academic/work related concerns are initially the responsibility of subject teachers and their Heads of Department.** Pupils who underperform against the expectation of a subject teacher through lack of effort or engagement will, in the first instance, be warned by the subject teacher and may be required to serve detentions given by him/her. If the problem persists, a referral may be made by the subject teacher to the Head of Department. It may only be necessary for the Head of Department to warn the pupil in order to support the subject teacher, however, if the problem persists the main remedy is a **departmental detention** – run by the department on a rotational basis or by the Head of Department.
- (iii) In some cases, a pupil's underperformance in one subject is often a symptom of more general problems across a range of subjects. Heads of Year are able to identify any such patterns by monitoring the number of referrals for a specific pupil from different subject teachers over a short period of time, or through formal reviews i.e. 'snapshots' or gradings at the end of each term or through written reports.
- (iv) Pupils with several subject referrals or poor grades/reports fall within the responsibilities of Form Tutors and Heads of Year. **Departmental detentions will not normally be appropriate in these cases.** Instead they will be monitored according to the nature and seriousness of the problem faced with the pupil. At each level parents will be informed and involved in the process:
- **Level 1** – A Form Tutor may instigate a **report sheet** where the boy will be expected to hand the sheet to his subject teachers at the start of each lesson. A Form Tutor may place a boy on report for academic / organisational issues or for concerns about his behaviour / attitude. It is

recognised that sometimes issues of behaviour/academic work overlap so the Form Tutor will assess which report sheet is the most appropriate to use

- **Level 2** – If there is no progress at Level 1, the Head of Year, after consultation and in collaboration with the Form Tutor, will instigate a **Head of Year report**. This is a more detailed booklet which the pupil gives to his subject teacher at the beginning of each lesson. Targets are set and written at the front of the booklet. At the end of each lesson both the pupil and the teacher make a judgement on the behaviour/attitude of the pupil whilst in that lesson. The teacher gives a comment/score at the end of each lesson and relates it to the targets set.
- **Level 3** – Any pupils who have not made sufficient progress and improvement will be seen by the **Deputy Head Master**. It is to be expected that pupils requiring this level of monitoring may be asked to stay behind after School in order to complete homework and receive guidance from the Deputy Head. At this level very precise expectations about the pupil's behaviour/attitude/personal organisation will have been established. Contact with home is a likely course of action here to engage parents and get their support in helping their son get back on track. (This course of action may also take place at Level 2 if the Head of Year feels that this would be appropriate).

There is no compunction to follow the suggested protocol outlined above if it is not appropriate. This is at the discretion of the Head of Year/Deputy Head.

#### 4. Pastoral Care during Non-Teaching Time

- (i) Pastoral Care is not confined to times when pupils are in lessons. It is necessary both for their safety and wellbeing that good order be maintained throughout the school day. The School addresses this issue in a number of ways:
  - **Before School** – Members of staff are on duty between 8.25 a.m. and 8.40 a.m. (during COVID procedures this is 8.15 -8.35 at various points around School), patrolling the corridors, the School dining hall and supervising the North and South play areas.
  - **Break time** – 11 a.m. – 11.20 a.m. The School is closed to pupils at break time unless the weather is unsuitable. Two members of staff supervise the dining hall and another two supervise the North and South play areas.
  - **Lunchtime** – two members of staff supervise the Dining Hall and 'The Grammar' (used by Year 10/11). In addition, there are at least two senior members of staff are on duty elsewhere within the school.
- (ii) School Prefects play a significant supervisory role in the school, helping to clear the building at break time and lunchtime. They are also on duty at entrance/exit points to ensure the building remains clear. One prefect supervises a private study room at lunchtime (this provision has not applied during COVID for 'bubbling' purposes).
- (iii) Many members of staff are also in school during the lunch period - running / assisting with clubs and societies, teaching extra lessons and spending time in their form rooms. Their presence in the building also helps to ensure the safety and wellbeing of pupils (this provision has not applied during COVID for 'bubbling' purposes).

## 5. Educational Advice and Support

- (i) The School attaches importance to the nature and the quality of the advice it gives to pupils at different stages of their School careers:
- Making GCSE choices
  - Entry to the 6<sup>th</sup> Form and choice of A' levels
  - Applying for entrance to Higher Education
  - Seeking employment

(ii) **Making GCSE choices** – the School offers general advice during PSHE lessons. A school booklet sets out detailed guidance and an Options evening is held for parents, following the publication of the booklet. Advice is also given to pupils and parents individually at the Parents Evening, which follows soon after the Options Evening, and this is another forum for discussion with specific subject teachers and the Careers Adviser. The Head of Careers will also have discussions with individual pupils on request (during COVID much of this provision has been 'virtual').

(iii) Similar provision is made for **entry into the Sixth Form**. General advice is given during PSHE and a School booklet sets out detailed guidance. An evening is held for parents soon after the publication of the booklet. The Careers Adviser meets with pupils who wish to do so during the Spring Term, providing advice and guidance. Most pupils stay on into the Sixth Form and, so that each pupil makes a realistic choice of AS/A2 subjects, pupils will be required to receive the support of the relevant subject teachers before an option choice is agreed to. These discussions are designed to ensure that each pupil carefully assesses his options and fully understands what will be required of him if he is to study a subject to A level.

**Entrance to Higher Education** – extensive advice is given to Sixth Formers, and this is co-ordinated by the Head of Sixth Form. In Year 12, several Key Skills sessions are devoted to the advantages and disadvantages of University entrance and the procedures involved. All Year 12 pupils also attend a Higher Education Convention and their parents are invited to a Higher Education Evening at the School in April. The School holds its own Oxbridge evening in April, to which students from other Schools are also invited (during COVID much of this provision has been 'virtual').

(iv) The School offers extensive advice on UCAS personal statements and on the suitability of University choices. Practice interviews are offered to students on request and all Oxbridge Candidates receive practice interviews, either within the School or through a reciprocal arrangement with other local Schools.

(v) The School recognises the importance of advice following the publication of AS and A2 examination results and School is open after the publication of results in August in order to assist all pupils to gain entry to Higher Education, even if their results are not as required. A growing number of students take a Gap year and re-apply and the HE/UCAS Co-ordinator at School supports these Year 14 students.

(vi) (Each year a number of pupils in Year 11 and students in the Upper Sixth choose to go into employment or explore Further Education possibilities. All pupils receive careers guidance through PSHE/Citizenship lessons. Pupils who require more specific advice will receive at least one

interview with the Careers Adviser. Those who decide to seek employment or to enter Further Education benefit from these interviews by receiving guidance on application procedures or discussing current employment and training vacancies.

## 6. Communication with Parents

- (i) Good communication is vital in developing a professional partnership between home and School. The School attaches great importance to the nature and quality of communication with Parents and assesses carefully which method of communication is most appropriate for the circumstance - letter, telephone or face to face. Staff are sensitive to the commitments and concerns of parents, just as parents appreciate and recognise the busy lives of teaching staff.
- (ii) The range of home/school communication is extensive:
- The Home/School Agreement.
  - A bi-weekly email newsletter.
  - A detailed School report is sent to all parents, annually.
  - Termly Grade Sheets are sent out to all year groups.
  - 'Snapshots' on academic progress and organisational matters can lead to contact with parents if there is a cause for concern in the Lower and Upper School.
  - Parent and student consultation evenings for all years.
  - A range of Pastoral/subject monitoring reports (see the referral system)
  - The School Website
  - The Show My Homework App for homework, rewards and sanctions
  - The telephone and email are used to keep parents informed. Heads of Year are in touch quickly if there is a serious matter.

While we would like to believe that all parental enquiries, requests and letters of concern will be responded to promptly, given human nature, sometimes we may well fall short of this ideal. If you find this to be the case please contact Mr Hall, Deputy Head via the School Office.

## 6. External Support

There are a range of **Outside Support Agencies** that are available to support the School, its pupils and parents e.g. Trafford's Educational Welfare Officer (EWO) and Educational Psychologist and the Child Protection Agency.

- (i) The Deputy Head liaises with the **EWO** to discuss relevant issues affecting pupils' attendance. The EWO will visit a pupil's home and provide additional support as required, over and above that which the School can offer.
- (ii) **The School Counsellor** is in School two days a week and pupils can request confidential, face to face meetings with her to discuss any issues or concerns, whether they be school related or not. She will provide support and guidance as appropriate. Pupils will always be encouraged by the Counsellor to talk to their parents and inform them of their self-referral to the Counsellor.

Students may also be referred to the Counsellor by the Head of Year/Deputy Head/SENCO and, if so, their parents will normally be informed of the referral so that they can discuss and understand the reasoning for doing so.

The Counsellor will also speak with staff and Parents confidentially, on request, when they themselves feel that they need support, advice or someone to listen to their concerns.

- (iii) The Deputy Head liaises with the **School Counsellor** regularly. These discussions are used to obtain specialist advice in areas where internal school strategies have not been successful. Examples of these include:
- Pupils who are seriously underachieving in relation to CATS scores and other data
  - Pupils who exhibit challenging behaviour tendencies
  - Pupils who are very poorly motivated
  - The difficulties boys have when faced with bereavement or parental divorce. Parents express concerns about extreme behaviour at home.
- (iv) The Counsellor meets with pupils as required and these meetings are **confidential**. Only if the Counsellor feels that the student is putting themselves in danger by their behaviour will she speak to the Deputy Head. In such cases, the Student is informed of this.

The School **Designated Safeguard Lead** is the Deputy Head Master, **Mr Hall** or, in his absence, **Mrs Short** (Head of Year 7). Members of staff will report any concerns they have about child protection issues to him in confidence, in accordance with the Child Protection Policy of the School and, if necessary, School will make a referral to the Child Protection Authority.