

Child Protection Policy

Introductory statement

The Board of Management recognises that child protection and welfare considerations permeate all aspects of school life and must be reflected in all of the school's policies, practises and activities. Accordingly, in accordance with the requirements of the Department of Education and Skill's Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools, the Board of Management of St. Brigid's NS has agreed the following child protection policy:

1. The Board of Management has adopted and will implement fully and without modification the Department's Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools as part of this overall child protection policy.
2. The Designated Liaison Person (DLP) is Ciara Devane
3. The Deputy Designated Liaison Person (Deputy DLP) is Derek Gannon
4. In its policies, practises and activities St Brigid's NS will adhere to the following principles of best practice in child protection and welfare:

The school will

- Recognise that the protection and welfare of children is of paramount importance, regardless of all other considerations
- Fully co-operate with the relevant statutory authorities on relation to child protection and welfare matters
- Adopt safe practices to minimise the possibility of harm or accidents happening to children and protect workers from the necessity to take unnecessary risks that may leave themselves open to accusations of abuse or neglect
- Develop a practice of openness with parents and encourage parental involvement in the education of their children and
- Fully respect confidentiality requirements in dealing with child protection matters.

Prevention (refer to SPHE curriculum, the School Code of Behaviour)

The Stay Safe programme is the primary resource used in this school to provide education for children on abuse prevention. The programme is taught as part of the schools' SPHE Curriculum under the strand unit Safety and Protection. On enrolment of their child parents will be informed that the Stay Safe programme is in use in the school.

The formal lessons of the programme will be taught in their entirety every second year in accordance with the SPHE two-year cycle plan. Staff will make every effort to ensure that the messages of the programme are reinforced whenever possible, and as deemed necessary and relevant.

Procedures (refer to Anti-Bullying Policy and Health and Safety Statement)

All staff in this school will follow the recommendations for reporting concerns or disclosures as outlined in 'Children First : National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children'.

The Board of Management of this school has appointed Ciara Devane as the Designated Liaison Person (DLP) and Derek Gannon as the Deputy DLP.

The staff and management of this school have agreed;

- All concerns/disclosures involving child protection/child welfare issues will be reported in the first instance to the DLP or deputy DLP where appropriate.
- Each report to the DLP will be dated and signed by the person making that report
- A strict adherence to maintaining confidentiality – information regarding concerns or disclosures of abuse should only be given on a 'need to know' basis.

Practice (refer to Swimming Policy, School Tour/Outings Policies)

The following areas have been considered by the staff and board of management of this school as areas of specific concern in relation to child protection. Following discussion and consultation the staff and board of management have agreed that the following practices be adopted.

Physical contact

Physical contact between school personnel and the child should always be in response to the needs of the child and not the needs of the adult. While physical contact may be used to comfort, reassure or assist a child the following should be factors in determining it's appropriateness;

- It is acceptable to the child
- It is open and not secretive
- The age and development stage of the child

School personnel should avoid doing anything of a personal nature for children that they can do for themselves. Any contact should be as a result of a child's health and safety needs.

Visitors/Guest Speakers

Visitors/guest speakers should never be left alone with pupils. The school principal/teacher has a responsibility to check out the credentials of the visitor/guest speaker and to ensure that the material in use by guests is appropriate.

Children with specific toileting/intimate care needs

In all situations where a pupil needs assistance with toileting/intimate care a meeting will be convened, after enrolment and before the child starts school, between parents/guardians, class teacher, special needs assistant, principal and if appropriate the pupil. The purpose of the meeting will be to ascertain the specific needs of the child and to determine how the school can best meet those needs. The staff to be involved in this care will be identified and provision will be made for occasions when the particular staff involved are absent. A written copy of what has been agreed will

be made and kept in the child's file. Two members of staff will be present, where possible, when dealing with intimate care/toileting needs. Any deviation from the agreed procedure will be recorded and notified to the DLP and the parents/guardians.

Toileting accidents

Clean underwear and suitable clothing will be kept in the school so that if a pupil has an 'accident' of this nature they will in the first instance be offered fresh clothing into which they can change. If the pupil for whatever reason cannot clean or change themselves and the parents/guardians cannot be contacted the child will be assisted by members of staff familiar to the child. A record of all such incidents will be kept and principal and parents will be notified.

One to One teaching.

It is the policy in this school that one to one teaching is occasionally in the best interest of the child. Every effort will be made to ensure that this teaching takes place in an open environment , the classroom door will be left open. Parents of children who are to be involved in one to one teaching will be informed and their agreement sought. Work being carried out by Special Needs Assistants will be carried out under the direction of the class teacher in an open environment.

Changing for Games/PE/Swimming

Pupils will be expected to dress and undress themselves for Games/PE/Swimming. Where assistance is needed this will be done in family changing cubicles and with the consent of parents. Under no circumstances will members of staff/volunteers be expected to or allowed to dress/undress a child in a cubicle/private area'. In such situations where privacy is required the parent/guardian of the child will be asked to assist the child. At all times there must be adequate supervision of pupils. While every effort will be made to adhere to best practice as agreed and outlined above, in the event of an emergency where this is not possible or practicable a full record of the incident should be made and reported to principal and parents.

The Board of Management has ensured that the necessary policies, protocols or practises as appropriate are in place in respect of each of the above listed items.

This policy has been made available to school personnel, the Parents Association and is readily accessible to parents on request. A copy of this policy will be made available to the Department and the patron if requested.

Review and Monitoring

This policy will be monitored and reviewed by the Board of Management on an annual basis. The Board of Management will ensure that adequate training and support is provided for all staff.

Policy adopted by the BoM on _____

Signed _____

Chairperson

Signed _____

Principal

Date of next review _____

(See attached Appendix, pages 4 to 23 from the Children First: National Guidance for the Protection & Welfare of Children - Department of Children and Youth Affairs).