



Scoil Chaoimhín Naofa

St. Kevin's Primary School

Gleann dá Loch, Co. Chill Mhantáin
Glendalough, Co. Wicklow
Tel: (0404) 45460 Fax: (0404) 45399

Child Protection and Procedures Policy

The policy operates while the school is open and to all school related activities. This policy applies to pupils, teachers and staff members during school time and to all school related activities where pupils are expected to attend.

This policy reflects in part the characteristic spirit of the school as defined in the school's mission statement:

"Scoil Chaoimhín Naofa is a Catholic school under the patronage of the Archbishop of Dublin. In school we promote a caring, supportive and Christian community. We endeavour to provide a positive caring environment where good personal relationships and mutual respect are the cornerstones."

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, practices and activities. Accordingly, in accordance with the requirements of the Department of Education and Skills' Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools, the Board of Management of Scoil Chaoimhín Naofa, has agreed the following child protection.

At each board of management meeting the principal's report shall state the number of reports made to the HSE by the DLP, since the last board of management meeting. The principal's report shall state only the number and not include any other details. The principal's report shall also state the number of cases, since the last board meeting, where the DLP sought advice from the HSE and as a result referrals were made.

1. The BoM formally adopts and implements without modification the new "Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools' (2011) as part of their overall child protection policy.
 2. In doing so the BoM: fully implement the Stay Safe programme which is mandatory; fully implement the Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) programme which is mandatory; use the standard template child protection policy which is in Appendix 1 of the DES Child Protection Procedures
 3. The Designated Liaison Person (DLP) is Pádraig Murphy.
 4. The Deputy Designated Liaison Person (Deputy DLP) is Siobhán Parsons
 5. The names of the DLP and the Deputy DLP are on display at the entrance to the school.
-

6. The school's Child Protection Policy is available to all school personnel, the parents' association and parents on request.
7. In its policies, practices and activities, Scoil Chaoimhín Naofa 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 in 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.

Good Practice Guidelines

The staff of the school have identified the following areas and agreed good practice guidelines as follows:

While every effort will be made to adhere to best practice as agreed and outlined below, 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 the principal and parents.

Definition of Child Abuse

Child Abuse can be categorised into four different types: neglect, emotional abuse, physical abuse and sexual abuse.

Neglect: can be defined in terms of an omission, where the child suffers significant harm or impairment of development by being deprived of food, clothing, warmth, hygiene, intellectual stimulation, supervision and safety, attachment to and affection from adults, medical care. Neglect generally becomes apparent in different ways over a period of time rather than at one specific moment. Staff must inform the DLP if he/she is concerned or suspicious that a child is being neglected.

Emotional Abuse: occurs when a child's need for affection, approval, consistency and security are not met. Emotional abuse can be manifested in terms of the child's behavioural, cognitive, affective or physical functioning. A child may be affected by an event in his/her life and staff must inform the DLP if he/she is concerned or suspicious that a child's emotional needs are being neglected.

Physical Abuse: is any form of non-accidental injury or injury which results from wilful or neglectful failure to protect a child. Staff must inform the DLP if he/she is concerned or suspicious that a child may have been physically abused.

Sexual Abuse: occurs when a child is used by another person for his/her gratification or sexual arousal or for that of others. Staff must inform the DLP if he/she is concerned or suspicious that a child may have been sexually abused.

Designated Liaison Person

The Board of Management has appointed School Principal, **Pádraig Murphy** as Designated Liaison Person (DLP) and **Siobhán Parsons**, Deputy Principal as the Deputy DLP.

The role of the DLP is to liaise with all relevant agencies, whether in seeking advice, reporting, or in follow up consultations. If informed by a member of the school community of a concern the DLP should in the first instance seek advice by phone, from a senior child care officer/social worker/manager/designated person employed by the TUSLA. At this early stage all parties including the DLP may remain anonymous and there is no requirement on the DLP to disclose the names of any party including the name of the school or her own name. However, the DLP should note the name of any TUSLA employee who gives advice. It is incumbent on the DLP to follow through on all advice from TUSLA. Written records should be kept of all phone calls and meetings.

Basis for Reporting to TUSLA

A health board should always be informed when a person has reasonable grounds for concern that a child may have been abused, or is being abused, or is at risk of abuse. With regard to emotional abuse and/or physical neglect, consistent indication, over a period of time that a child is suffering from emotional neglect or physical neglect would constitute reasonable grounds for concern.

Procedures in dealing with a disclosure/suspicion from a child/third party

- Teachers who suspect child abuse/neglect should report their concerns to the DLP at the first instance and carefully record their observations over a period of time.
- Disclosures of Child Abuse/Neglect from a third party will be reported to the DLP. If a third party starts to tell a teacher about an alleged child abuse incident the teacher will ask them to speak to the DLP. If the person does not inform the DLP the teacher will do so.
- Where a child discloses alleged abuse/neglect to a staff member, the person receiving that information should listen carefully and supportively.
- It is not the role of any staff member or DLP to investigate an incident/allegation/suspicion. His/her role is to listen and record information.
- Great care must be taken not to abuse the child's trust. This should not be a formal interview.
 - Listen to the child
 - Do not ask leading questions or make suggestions to the child
 - Offer reassurance but do not make promises
 - Do not stop a child recalling significant events
 - Do not over-react
 - Confidentiality should be assured – **explain** that **further help may** have to be sought.
 - Record the discussion accurately noting:

What, where and when?

Descriptions and possible sketches of physical injuries

Explanations of injuries using direct quotations if appropriate

Sign and date the record

Retain the record securely

- Whether cases of abuse/neglect are suspected or confirmed, confidentiality will be respected. The information on individual cases will be restricted to the teacher(s) immediately involved with the child and will be on a need to know basis.
 - The DLP will record the incident. It is not the function of the teacher or the DLP to investigate the issue.
-

- If the suspected abuser is the DLP then the suspicion and any records will be passed on to the Chairperson who will proceed as per guidelines.
- The Chairperson of the Board of Management will be informed of the disclosure.
- Informal contact with the designated person in TUSLA will be made, seeking advice as to whether a referral should be made. The DLP will be explicit that s/he is requesting advice and not making a report. It is not necessary at this stage for the DLP to disclose his/her name or the name of the school.
- The advice given by TUSLA must be acted upon.
- If the advice is not to refer, the DLP will record this advice as the reason for non-referral. The chairperson of the Board of Management will be informed.
- If the advice from TUSLA is to refer the case, the DLP will do so. However, prior to referring, the DLP will inform the parent of his/her intention to refer, unless this course of action is injurious to the child.
- Following referral and the completion of the standard form, the school will have no further part to play in the investigation.
- If a case conference is required, the DLP will be invited to attend.

Records will be held in a central, securely locked location.

Allegations against an employee

- Procedures followed are similar to those of a disclosure
- Employee is made aware of the allegation against him/her
- Employee will be given the opportunity to respond to the allegation in writing and at a meeting of the Board of Management
- BOM meeting to review the allegation, giving due consideration to any advice given by TUSLA and Gardaí
- The BOM will consider placing the employee on administrative leave, with full pay, pending the outcome of investigations by TUSLA and Gardaí.
- On conclusion of any investigation the BOM will then determine the employment status of the employee.

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 its appropriateness:-

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

School personnel should avoid doing anything of a personal nature for children that they can do for themselves.

Organisational Implications and Prevention of Child Abuse

Gárda Vetting

The school has undertaken to follow the procedures as set down by legislation for Garda Vetting of Personnel in the school.

Staff will be asked for copies of their vetting forms and these will be kept on file in the principal's office.

Visitors/Guest Speakers

All visitors to the school are required to report to the office on arrival. Staff on yard duty will be aware of visitors entering the schoolyard and direct them to the school office. The drop-off/pick-up of children throughout the teaching day will be processed through the school office. Where the agreed parents/guardians do not collect the child, the school must be informed in advance of arrangements where possible.

The school (principal/teachers) 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.

Collection of children by person not known to staff during the school day

If parents/guardians or person who normally collects a child is unavailable to do so, the school must be informed in advance of arrangements. Children will not be released to an unauthorised person under any circumstances.

Access

- Access to the school during the day is only through the main door with coded key pad and a camera. Parents/Visitors are requested to wait at the office. A staff member will collect children and bring them to their parents at the office.
- The door into the Infants' Classroom is opened to allow children access to the school.
- All other doors are fire exits and are not in use for access to the school.

Supervision

Every effort will be made to ensure that there is comprehensive supervision of children throughout the school day. A roster of staff for playground supervision will be drawn up each year and displayed in the staff room. Children are to be visible in the playground. Children are instructed not to leave the playground or engage with adults outside of the playground. Children are not permitted to spend break times in the classrooms except on wet days when supervision is in place.

Toileting

It is school policy that only one child is permitted to enter the toilet cubicle at a time. Children who need to use the toilet during Break and Lunch Times must seek the permission of the teacher on playground duty. During Break and Lunch Times the toilets beside the halla are to be used.

Clean underwear and suitable clothing are kept in the school (Infants Classroom and the ASD classroom) 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 the child will be assisted by members of staff familiar to the child. In all such situations two members of staff should be present. A record of all such incidents will be kept and principal and parents will be notified.

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 ascertaining 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 is/are absent.

Two members of staff will be present when dealing with intimate care/toileting needs.

This is in keeping with best practice, keeps the best interests of the child to the fore and maintains the child's personal dignity. Such procedures, when agreed will be communicated to all parties involved and recorded and any deviation from the agreed procedure will be recorded and notified to the DLP and the parents/guardians.

One to One Involvement

It is the policy in this school that one to one teaching is often in the best interest of the child. Every effort will be made to ensure that this teaching takes place in an open environment. If a staff member/visiting professional such as Speech and Language therapist/ Occupational therapist has to work/deal/communicate with children on a one-to-one basis, they are requested to leave the classroom door open if there is not a glass partition fitted on the door. A glass partition has been fitted in the doors of resource/special needs rooms.

Parents of children who are to be involved in one to one teaching will be informed and their agreement sought. Where possible, children in Special Education will be taught in small groups. Work being carried out by special needs assistants will be carried out under the direction of the class teacher in an open environment. Where adults come into school to work with children in reading or whatever capacity the class teacher will instruct them and supervise their involvement.

Changing for Games/PE/Swimming

Pupils will be expected to dress and undress themselves for games/PE/Swimming. In such situations where assistance is required the parent/guardian (or SNA where appropriate) of the child will be asked to assist the child. Children from Rang 3 and Rang 4 take part in swimming lessons.

First Aid

Please Refer to School's Health and Safety Policy.

Court Orders

In all cases where the school has been made aware of and has received a copy of a court order, all conditions relating to school will be complied with. The Principal will make teachers aware if a court order is in place.

Attendance

School attendance is monitored carefully. Attendance Certificates are awarded termly and annually to children who achieve a high attendance. Tusla will be informed of any concerns relating to a child's attendance. Children who miss 20 days or more will be reported to Tusla in accordance with legislation.

Induction of Teachers and Ancillary Staff

It is the responsibility of the D.L.P to inform all new teachers and ancillary staff of these procedures in our Child Protection Policy.

School Tours/Trips

School staff accompanying children on school tours/trips (including after school sporting events) will deliver a duty of care commensurate with the trip/venue. The higher the risk factor the higher the number of teachers/responsible adults involved. Hired buses/vehicles must provide safe transportation and a functioning seatbelt for every child/adult.

The following issues will be addressed:

- Insurance
- Suitability of Accommodation
- Staffing Issues
- Programme of events
- Expectation of Leaders, Teachers, Parents and Children
- Health and Safety Issues
- Accident and emergency procedures.
- Consent forms are required for every tour or trip away.

DVDs

Staff will always ensure that any DVD shown to the children is age appropriate. Scoil Chaoimhín Naofa is a primary school and as such the following are the only DVDs that should be shown to children:

General Viewing (G)

Parental Guidance (PG)

12 A (for children who are twelve years old with adult supervision)

No DVDs rated as suitable for 15 year olds, 18 year olds or adults will be shown to the children.

Staff Cars

In rare instances where a staff car must be used to transport a child, children will never be taken alone.

Implementation

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

This policy has been made available to the Board of Management, school personnel and the Parents' Association and is readily accessible to parents on request or through the school website. All staff members, Board of Management and Parents' Association have a copy of the new circular (Circular 65/2011).

A copy of this policy will be made available to the Department and the patron if requested.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Board of Management has primary responsibility for the care and welfare of all pupils.

The DLP has specific responsibility for Child Protection in the school.

All members of staff have a duty of care to ensure that arrangements are in place to protect children from harm.

Ratified by

Mr Paul Carter Chairperson BOM:

Date:

Review Date:

This policy will be reviewed by the Board of Management once in every school year. As a matter of procedure this policy will be reviewed and upgraded when necessary.

Appendix 1

DES Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools as per Circular 0065/2011 (attached).