

Policy on Child Protection.

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 St Brigid's school, Drumcong 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. These procedures can be accessed by clicking on the attached link to The Department of Education & Skills website:

http://www.education.ie/en/Schools-Colleges/Information/Child-Protection/cp_procedures_primary_post_primary_2011.pdf

2. The Designated Liaison Person (DLP) is Ms Angela White.

3. The Deputy Designated Liaison Person (Deputy DLP) is Ms Finola Mc Gowan.

4. In its policies, practices and activities, St Brigid's school, Drumcong 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.

The school will also adhere to the above principles in relation to any adult pupil with a special vulnerability.

5. Policies, practices and activities of particular relevance to child protection.

Code of Behaviour

Children are encouraged at all times to play co-operatively and misbehaviour is addressed under our Code of Behaviour. If an incident occurs which is considered to be of a sexualised nature the DLP will be notified who will record it and respond to it appropriately.

Accidents and Medicines

While every precaution will be taken under our Health and Safety Statement to ensure the safety of children, we realise that accidents will happen. Accidents will be noted in our Incident book and are addressed under our accident policy as part of Health and Safety.

Attendance

Our school attendance will be monitored as per our attendance policy. With regards to child protection particular attention will be paid to trends in non-attendance. We will also monitor non-attendance in correlation with signs of neglect/physical/emotional abuse.

Anti - Bullying

Bullying behaviour is addressed under our Anti-Bullying policy. If the behaviour involved is of a sexualised nature or regarded as being particularly abusive then the matter will be referred to the DLP. The school strongly advises that no children under thirteen years of age should have access to social networking sites. Parents are urged to be vigilant as these sites are frequently misused and may lead to bullying both inside and outside school.

Children travelling in staff cars

Members of the school staff will not carry pupils alone in their cars at any time (except where unavoidable due to the seriousness of a particular situation and in the interest of the health and welfare of the pupil).

Communication

Every effort will be made to enhance pupil-teacher communication. If pupils have concerns they will be listened to sympathetically. The SPHE/Oral Language/RE programmes allow for open pupil-teacher communication, which is hoped will aid the pupil-teacher relationship.

Induction of Staff

The DLP will be responsible for informing all new teachers and ancillary staff of the Department's Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools. The DLP will give a copy of these procedures to all new staff. All new teachers are required to teach the designated SPHE objectives for their class.

Induction of Pupils

All parents and children will be made aware of attendance rules and their implications as laid down in the Education Welfare Act (2000). All parents will be informed of the programmes in place in the school that deal with personal development e.g. RSE, Walk Tall, Stay Safe and SPHE. All new parents are given a copy of the school's enrolment policy, which outlines the procedures parents and children should use when contacting the school if there are absences or concerns of an educational/personal/family matter. Parents are encouraged to make an appointment with the class teacher/principal if they wish to discuss their child's progress. All parents are given a copy of the school's Code of Behaviour and Anti-Bullying policies.

Record Keeping

Teachers will keep each child's file updated with results of assessments carried out. Roll books will be updated daily. Sensitive information regarding children will be shared on a need-to-know basis. All educational files of pupils who no longer attend this school are kept in a secure place for a period of 5 years.

Supervision

The school's supervision policy will be implemented by all staff to ensure that there is comprehensive supervision of children at all breaks and before and after school. (see rota on staff notice board). A further rota is displayed to cover the 10.50 and lunchtime breaks.

Swimming

Children will be brought by bus to the swimming pool. Parents may assist their own children in the changing rooms.

Visibility

Teachers will endeavour to ensure that children are visible in the school playground. Children will not be allowed to spend time in classrooms, toilets or shelter where they would not be under adult supervision. Pupils are not permitted to leave the school playground or to engage with people who are outside of the playground under any circumstances

Visitors

Teachers on playground duty will be aware of visitors entering the school playground and will ascertain their intentions. They will be supervised in the discharge of their business. Under no circumstances will visitors or guest speakers be left alone with any pupil/s. Furthermore, it is the responsibility of teachers to ensure that material used by guests is appropriate.

Volunteers

When the school requires volunteers for help with school tours etc it will only call on parents that are known to be vetted through their employment or through voluntary work.

Toileting Accidents

Clean underwear and suitable clothing will be kept in school. Should an accident of this nature occur, fresh clothing will be provided. If the pupil cannot for any reason clean or change themselves, and the parents/guardians cannot be contacted, the child will be assisted by members of staff familiar to them. In all such situations, two members of staff will be present.

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.

Junior and Senior Infants

Infant teachers will teach content objectives as laid out under the 10 strand units in our SPHE programme. They are

- Self Identity
- Taking care of my body
- Growing and changing
- Safety and protection
- Making decisions
- Myself and my family
- My friends and other people
- Relating to others
- Developing citizenship.

After discussion teachers felt that these strand units would enable children to develop assertiveness, body integrity, skills relating to self-care, respect for others, identification of feelings and skills necessary to recognise and tell of abuse.

The SPHE programme will be supported, using the Walk Tall resources, our Alive-O programme and Stay Safe resources.

1st & 2nd classes

Again teachers agreed that implementing our SPHE programme as laid out under the 10 strand units named above would enable the children to develop skills, knowledge and attitudes pertaining to self-esteem, esteem for others and the environment and skills pertaining to self-care and disclosure. Healthy eating, information on substance use and anti-bullying awareness will be introduced.

3rd and 4th classes

Our SPHE programme will again be implemented according to the 10 strand units. Knowledge, skills and attitudes developed in previous classes will be built on. Children will be enabled to develop intra-personal skills and inter-personal skills. As children mature they will be challenged to develop their decision-making skills. They will be encouraged to develop self-protection skills pertaining to smoking and alcohol. Peer pressure and the influence of the media will also be examined. The development of self-esteem, esteem for others, assertiveness, awareness of feelings, and skills around self-protection and disclosure will underpin our teaching.

5th and 6th classes

Our SPHE programme will be implemented according to the curricular objectives as laid out under the 10 strands in the SPHE Curriculum. Skills, knowledge and attitudes developed in earlier classes will be enhanced. Children will continue to develop self-awareness and positive attitudes to themselves, others, their environment and the wider world in which they live. Self-protection and respect for others will be fostered, decision-making skills developed, peer influence and media bias examined. Knowledge in relation to legal and illegal drugs and the prevention of substance misuse will be further developed. Children will be enabled to develop good group-building skills, anti-bullying awareness and conflict resolution skills. Self-protection will be emphasised and protection of younger, less able people. Positive attitudes to sexuality will be developed and respect for self and others fostered (see RSE policy).

6. This policy has been made available to school personnel and the Parents' Association and is readily accessible to parents on request. It is also available on the school website:

www.drumcongns.ie

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

7. This policy is reviewed by the Board of Management once in every school year. At each Board of Management meeting the principal's report includes the number of cases where a report involving a child in the school has been submitted to the HSE or of cases where the DLP sought advice from the HSE and as a result of such advice, no report was made. Where no such reports are made, this will also be reported to the Board. These are recorded in the minutes of each Board meeting.

Review and Ratification

This policy was reviewed and ratified by the Board of Management on

Signed: _____ Signed: _____

Chairperson of Board of Management

Principal

Date: _____ Date: _____

Date of next review: November/December 2017

Communication: This policy is available on the school's website. It is also available on request from the Principal / Secretary