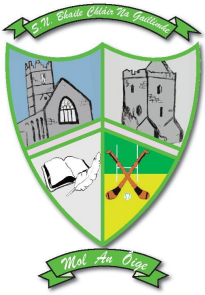


S.N. Bhaile Chláir na Gaillimhe



Cosaint Leanaí



S.N. Bhaile Chláir na Gaillimhe

Baile Clár na Gaillimhe,
Co. na Gaillimhe

Fón: (091) 798720

Ríomhphost: clareway.ias@eircom.net

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Introductory Statement

The Child Protection Policy was drafted in a process that involved consultation, discussion, collaboration and planning by the school staff, the Board of Management, the parents and the children of the school. This policy is reviewed on an annual basis.

This document incorporates changes in legislation and takes account of the provisions of each of the following pieces of legislation:

- * Freedom of Information Act 1997
- * The Education Act 1998
- * The Child Welfare Act 2000
- * *Children First* – National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2011.

The new procedures are based on the recently published *Children First – National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2011*, and *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools* (Dept of Education & Skills, 2011).

References

- * *Children First* (Dept of Children and Youth Affairs 2011)
- * *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools* (Dept of Education & Skills, 2011).
- * *Our Duty to Care – The Principals of Good Practice for the Protection of Children and Young People* (2002)

Acronyms

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| * HSE – Health Service Executive | * DES – Department of Education and Skills |
| * DLP – Designated Liaison Person | * DDLP – Deputy Designated Liaison Person |

Rationale

The Board of Management recognises that the 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. In accordance with requirements of the Department of Education and skills' Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools, the Board of Management of S.N. Bhaile Chláir na Gaillimhe has agreed the following child protection policy. The school has adopted the Child Protection Guidelines and Procedures, DES (2001) and Revised Guidelines (2011) in their entirety and wishes to detail in this policy the procedures that will be followed in relation to child protection

References:

- * Child Protection - DES Guidelines and Procedures.
- * Children First - National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children by the Department of Health and Children.
- * Children First Summary - National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children, by the Department of Health and Children.
- * <http://www.tusla.ie> – TÚSLA – An Gníomhaireacht Um Leanáí agus an Teaghlach / Child and Family Agency

Following consultations between the Department and organisations representing school management, parents and teachers, the Department of Children and Youth Affairs and the Health Service Executive (HSE), revised Child Protection Procedures for Primary Schools have been drawn up. These new procedures are based on the recently published *Children First – National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2011*. *Children First* is National Guidance that promotes the protection of children from abuse and neglect. It states what organisations need to do to keep children safe, and what different bodies and the general public should do if they are concerned about a child's safety and welfare. The Guidance deals with the recognition, reporting and management of child safety concerns. It incorporates significant improvements to the previous school guidelines that are intended to better ensure consistent and uniform implementation.

It sets out a number of key messages relating to the duty to protect children. Among these are the following:

- * the safety and welfare of children is everyone's responsibility
- * children will have safer lives, where everyone is attentive to their wellbeing
- * people who work with children across a range of areas understand their personal responsibility for safe practice in their organisation,
- * the reporting of concerns and co-operation with statutory bodies.

All organisations including Government Departments have an overall corporate duty and responsibility to safeguard children by:

- * promoting the general welfare, health, development and safety of children;
- * adopting and consistently applying a safe and clearly defined method of recruiting and selecting staff and volunteers;

- * developing tailored guidance and procedures, in accordance with Children First: National Guidance, for staff and volunteers who may have reasonable grounds for concern about the safety and welfare of children involved with the organisation;
- * identifying a designated liaison person to act as a liaison with outside agencies and a resource person to any staff member or volunteer who has child protection and welfare concerns. The designated liaison person is responsible for reporting allegations or concerns of child abuse to the HSE Children and Family Services or to An Garda Síochána;
- * ensuring that the organisation has clear written procedures on the action to be taken if allegations of abuse against employees/volunteers are made;
- * raising awareness within the organisation about potential risks to children's safety and welfare;
- * developing effective procedures for responding to accidents and complaints.

The legislation means that all organisations will:

- * have a duty to comply with Children First;
- * have a duty to share relevant information in the best interests of the child;
- * have a duty to cooperate with other relevant services in the best interest of the child.

The Board of Management of S.N. Bhaile Chláir na Gaillimhe endorses “Children First”, the designated guidelines for the protection and welfare of children as issued by the Department of Health and Children (September 1999) and “Child Protection Guidelines and Procedures” from the Department of Education & Science 2001 and 2011. The Board of Management has put in place the necessary arrangements to ensure compliance with the *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*. This child protection policy adheres to certain key principles of best practice in child protection and welfare and the Board of Management will adopt and implement this policy with immediate effect.

It is intended that this policy give direction and guidance to the Board of Management and school personnel in dealing with allegations or suspicions of child abuse. It also provides sufficient information to the Board of Management and staff to enable us to be alert and to be aware of what to do in situations where child abuse may be a concern or a suspicion. Our policy emphasises that the safety and well-being of the child must be a priority

The National Office for Children and Family Services of the HSE has also published a **Child Protection and Welfare Handbook** designed as a quick reference book to help support and standardise the work of social workers and other relevant practitioners in dealing with child protection and welfare cases. It includes information on social work procedures and practice from referral through assessment to intervention. This handbook is published on the website of the HSE at www.hse.ie .

Copies are available in the staffroom, the secretary's office and with the Designated Liaison Person and the Deputy Designated Liaison Person.

Relationship to the Characteristic Spirit of the School

S.N. Bhaile Chláir na Gaillimhe is a Catholic School with a group of pupils, parents, staff and management who share a similar vision. Children and families of other faiths and beliefs are also welcomed into our school and share this vision.

We, the staff in S.N. Bhaile Chláir na Gaillimhe aim to:

- * provide for the holistic development of each child - physically, intellectually, emotionally, creatively, spiritually and socially
- * enable each child to develop in an open, happy, safe, stimulating and mutually respectful environment
- * provide an active, enriched learning environment for children with the availability of appropriate, instructional materials, resources and classroom adaptations (as resources permit)
- * develop a love of learning and an openness to lifelong learning
- * foster a sense of community between management, teachers, parents and children and an awareness of belonging to the whole community
- * develop in students an awareness and appreciation of our culture, heritage with particular emphasis on the Irish language
- * develop an appreciation of the environment and one's responsibility for its preservation
- * prepare each child for his/her future in education and in society

Mission Statement

The Board of Management, staff and parents of S.N. Bhaile Chláir na Gaillimhe are committed to the following mission:

S.N. Bhaile Chláir na Gaillimhe is a happy, safe and welcoming environment for all, a place where:

- * Catholic values are practised and valued and there is a shared commitment to the Catholic ethos of the school
- * everybody is respected, included and is treated fairly and equally
- * there are clear goals that are commonly agreed and shared
- * honest, open communication and consultation is fostered and decision making is a democratic process with input from all members of the school community
- * diversity is valued and evident and emphasis is on inclusion
- * the highest standards of learning and teaching are promoted and celebrated
- * emphasis is on the provision of a holistic education, enabling each student to achieve their full potential
- * effort and commitment is recognised, affirmed and encouraged
- * teachers and children are inspired to be lifelong learners in a vastly changing world
- * parents are appreciated as partners in education
- * a sense of community and pride in our local parish is fostered
- * all strive for school improvement from year to year and change is embraced in a positive way
- * a love of Irish culture is developed and use of Irish language is promoted

In its policies, practices and activities, S.N. Bhaile Chláir na Gaillimhe will adhere to the 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.

Aims of Child Protection Policy of S.N. Bhaile Chláir na Gaillimhe

The Board of Management, staff and entire school community aim:

- * To provide an environment where children feel happy and safe.
- * To protect all children.
- * To familiarise the Board of Management, the school staff and all school personnel with the content of Children First and the Child Protection Procedures and Guidelines for Primary Schools.
- * To assist the implementation of the guidelines and the child protection policy.
- * To assist and give direction and guidance to the Board of Management and to school staff in protecting children and dealing with allegations or suspicions of child abuse.
- * To assist staff in identifying and reporting child abuse.
- * To outline the role, responsibilities and duties of the Designated Liaison Person and the Deputy Designated Liaison Person, Chairperson of the Board of Management, members of the Board of Management and school staff in relation to suspicions or allegations of child abuse.
- * To implement the Department of Education and Science most recent Guidelines.
- * To inform newly qualified teachers, new teachers, temporary teachers and substitute teachers of our Child Protection Policy.

Roles and Responsibilities

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 **Carmel Ní Bhroin** (Príomh Oide).
3. The **Deputy Designated Liaison Person** (Deputy DLP) is **Éilís Áine de Raulbh** (Príomh Oide Tánaisteach)

Role and Responsibility of the Board of Management

The Board of Management:

- * provides children with the highest possible standard of care in order to promote their well being and protect them from harm.
- * recognises that it has two duties of care. The primary duty is the protection, safety and welfare of the children attending S.N. Bhaile Chláir na Gaillimhe. The Board, as an employer, also has duties and responsibilities towards its employees.
- * recognises that the safety and well being of children attending the school as well as those visiting the school for organised school-related activities, is a priority, and therefore it undertakes to include Child Protection as well as Health and Safety matters as items on the agenda of all Board meetings
- * fully co-operate with the relevant statutory authorities
- * ensures that all school staff, teaching and non-teaching are aware of their obligations under the guidelines detailed in Children First and the procedures to be followed in the event of concern.
- * has appointed Carmel Ní Bhroin (Principal), as designated liaison person (DLP) and Éilís Áine de Raulbh as the deputy designate liaison person (DDL) . The role of the DLP is to liaise with all of the relevant agencies whether in seeking advice, reporting or on follow-up consultations. Names of the Designated Liaison Person and the Deputy Designated Liaison Person are displayed in the staffroom, offices and at all entrances.
- * ensures that appropriate and ongoing training as necessary will be available for DLP, DDL and staff.
- * addresses and deals with allegations or suspicions of child abuse
- * ensures that relevant content and prevention programmes are taught through the school curriculum.
- * ensures the prevention of child abuse
- * deals with allegations of child abuse by a school employee

- * ensures attendance at Child Protection Meetings/Case Conferences
- * ensures that all relevant records are kept in a secure place
- * complies with thorough recruitment procedures. The Board fully endorses arrangements for the vetting of teaching and non-teaching staff as outlined in Circulars 0094/2006 and Circular 0063/2010 1.7.2 1.7.3 Vetting does not take the place of normal recruitment procedures, such as seeking and following up of references and ensuring that any unexplained gaps in employment records/curriculum vitae are satisfactorily accounted for. The Board ensures compliance with the Department's requirements in relation to the provision of a child protection related statutory declaration and an associated form of undertaking by all persons being appointed to teaching and non-teaching positions
- * will seek legal advice if an allegation of abuse is made against a school employee
- * notes that school employees may be subject to erroneous or malicious allegations. Any allegation of abuse will be dealt with sensitively. The employee will be treated fairly which includes the right not to be judged in advance of a full and fair enquiry. The Board accepts that the principles of natural justice and fair procedures must be adhered to
- * believes that the academic, personal and social development of children flourishes in a culture where good relationships are encouraged, people feel valued and respected and appropriate support is available for those in difficulty.
- * is committed to the maintenance of the environment where children feel secure, are encouraged to express themselves and are listened to. All children in the school will be made aware that there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried. In addition, opportunities will be included in the curriculum for children to develop the skills they need to keep them safe.
- * undertakes to circulate this Child Protection policy statement to all parents and guardians at time of enrolment.
- * ensures that our Child Protection Policy applies to all staff, members of the Board of Management, volunteers and contractors working in the school.
- * ensures the revised Child Protection Policy is implemented and will be subject to review at the start of each academic year forthwith.

LEGISLATION

Board members and staff are aware of their legal obligations in reporting child abuse.

Protection for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act, 1998:

- * The provision of immunity from civil liability to any person who reports child abuse “reasonably and in good faith” to designated officers of the HSE or any member of An Garda Síochána.
- * The provision of significant protections for employees who report child abuse. These protections cover all employees and all forms of discrimination up to, and including, dismissal.
- * The creation of an offence of false reporting of child abuse where a person makes a report of child abuse to the appropriate authorities “knowing that statement to be false”. This is a criminal offence designed to protect innocent persons from malicious reports.

Section 26 of the Freedom of Information Act 1997:

Consequently, should a member of a Board of Management or school personnel furnish information with regard to suspicions of child abuse or neglect to the Designated Liaison Person of the school, or to the school authority, such communication would be regarded under common law as having qualified privilege. Qualified privilege arises where the person making the communication has a duty to do so, or a right, or interest to protect the child and where the communication is made to a person with a similar duty, right or interest. The person making the report, acting in loco parentis, would be expected to act in the child’s best interests and in making the report would be regarded as acting in such a manner. Privilege can be displaced only where it can be established that the person making the report acted maliciously.

Freedom of Information Acts, 1997 & 2003

Any reports which are made to the Health Service Executive may be subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information Acts, which enable members of the public to obtain access to personal information relating to them which is in the possession of public bodies. However, the Freedom of Information Acts also provides that public bodies may refuse access to information obtained by them in confidence. The exemptions and exclusions which are relevant to child protection include the following:

- * protecting records covered by legal professional privilege;
- * protecting records which would facilitate the commission of a crime;
- * protecting records which would reveal a confidential source of information.

The Data Protection Acts, 1988 and 2003

The Data Protection Acts are designed to protect the rights of individuals with regard to personal data. The law defines personal data as “data relating to a living individual who is or can be identified from the data or from the data in conjunction with other information that is in, or is likely to come into, possession of the data controller”. The Data Protection Amendment Act 2003 brought manual records into the scope of the legislation whereas the 1988 Act referred only to computer files.

The Acts give a right to every individual, irrespective of nationality or residence, to establish the existence of personal data, to have access to any such data relating to him/her and to have inaccurate data rectified or erased. It requires data controllers to make sure that the data they keep are collected fairly, are accurate and up-to-date, are kept for lawful purposes, and are not used or disclosed in any manner incompatible with those purposes. It also requires both data controllers and data processors to protect the data they keep, and imposes on them a special duty of care in relation to the individuals about whom they keep such data.

Confidentiality

- * All information regarding concerns of possible child abuse and neglect is only shared on a “need to know basis in the interests of the child. However, giving information to those who need to have that information, for the protection of a child who may have been abused or neglected, or is being abused and neglected, or is at risk of abuse or neglect is not a breach of confidentiality.
- * Childrens names will not be recorded on any school records. Children will be identified by their registration number.
- * In the interest of protecting the anonymity of the child, no details of the case will be disclosed to the Board of Management unless there are issues which need to be addressed directly by the Board of Management.
- * Any information or details that might identify a child will not be recorded in the minutes of Board of Management meetings

Procedures in the Event of Suspicions of Abuse

- * Any staff who suspects that a child is being abused has a responsibility to report their concerns 'reasonably and in good faith' to the DLP.
- * Staff should observe and record over time the dates, signs, symptoms or behaviour causing them concern.
- * Children are identified by their registered number.
- * Records of cases are kept on file in the Principal's office for 21 years.
- * It is not the role of a school employee to investigate allegations of child abuse. The role of the school employee is to recognise, respond, refer and report.
- * The HSE are obliged to answer any queries a school may have. Only a member of the HSE has the statutory right to question a child.
- * When a disclosure is made by a child to a school employee, the employee should follow the guidelines listed in Appendix A. Copies of these guidelines are in the desk drawer in every classroom.
- * The school employee reports the matter to the Designated Liaison Person who will follow the procedures listed in Appendix B.
- * In cases where school personnel have concerns about a child and are not sure whether to report the matter to the HSE, they will seek appropriate advice. The DLP will consult with the Social Worker and will be explicit that she is requesting advice and consultation and is not making a report. The DLP will not at this stage give any identifying details. If the HSE advises that a referral should be made, the DLP will act on that advice. In the event of an emergency or the non-availability of the HSE Staff, the report will be made to a Garda Síochána
- * If the HSE advises that no referral should be made at this stage, the DLP will record this advice and inform the school employee of decision.
- * The DLP will inform the Chairperson of the Board of Management and the Patron of the School if a referral is made to the HSE. The DLP shall retain a record of the consultation with the HSE, which will note the date, the name of the HSE official and the advice given.
- * The DLP completes the standard reporting form.
- * When submitting a report to the HSE or to the Garda Síochána, the DLP will inform a parent or guardian, unless doing so is likely to endanger the child or place the child at further risk. A decision not to inform a parent or guardian should be briefly recorded together with reasons for not doing so.

- * Following referral and completion of the standard form, the school have no further part to play in the investigation. All records and a copy of the form will be stored in a filing cabinet in the Principal's office.
- * Should no progress or response be forthcoming from the Social Welfare Officer, the DLP has the right to contact the Head Duty Officer.
- * A request from the Health Board for a school employee to attend a Child Protection Conference will be made to the DLP, who will consult with the Chairperson of the Board of Management. The Chairperson may through the DLP, request the appropriate authorities to clarify why the attendance of the school employee at the Child Protection Conference is considered necessary and who else is going to be present.
 - It is normal for a person attending a child protection conference to provide a report. This may be given orally.
 - Following a child protection conference a teacher may be requested to keep a child under observation in a manner not consistent with her/his existing duties. Please see Appendices. Areas of physical abuse can be recorded on a human image.
 - Substitute costs will be made by the Department of Education and Science in respect of teachers required to attend a Child Protection Conference during school hours. A letter, signed by the relevant HSE official, confirming the attendance of the teacher will be presented to the principal and retained in the school. A claim for the substitute teacher will be processed through the On Line Claims System (OLCS)
- * The DLP informs class teacher if a child protection report relating to that child has been made to the HSE in the past
- * Where a child transfers from or leaves a school (including transfers from primary to post-primary) and where the DLP is aware that a child protection report relating to that child has been made to the HSE in the past, the DLP will inform the HSE of the child's transfer/move.
- * In a situation where child abuse is alleged to have been carried out by another child, DLP follows the reporting procedures.
- * Inappropriate sexualised behaviour between children is taken seriously. The principal and relevant teachers concerned should arrange separate meetings with the parents/carers of all the children involved in such behaviour with a view to resolving the situation.
- * Inappropriate sexualised behaviour may also be indicative of a situation that requires assessment by the HSE.
- * In cases where children are sexually abusive towards other children, it is the responsibility of the HSE to establish appropriate treatment programmes to cater for children who engage in abusive behaviour against other children.
- * Bullying is defined as repeated aggression – whether it be verbal, psychological or physical.. It includes behaviours such as teasing, taunting, threatening, hitting or extortion by one or more persons against a victim. Bullying can also take the form of racial abuse. With developments in modern technology, children can also be the victims of non-contact bullying, via mobile phones, the internet and other personal devices. In situations

where the incident is serious and where the behaviour is regarded as bullying and potentially abusive, the school will consult the HSE with a view to drawing up an appropriate response, such as a management plan.

- * The Board of Management shall make appropriate arrangements to minimise the possibility of any abusive behaviour recurring within the school. The Board of Management shall also provide assurances to parents/carers of the abuse victim that the school will take all reasonable measures to ensure the safety of their child within the school.

Allegations or Suspicions of Abuse by an Employee

- * Where suspicions or allegations of child abuse by a school employee exist, the protection of children and their well-being and safety must be a priority. Any allegation of abuse against an employee will be dealt with sensitively and the employee will be fairly treated. This includes the right not to be judged in advance of a full and fair enquiry. The employee will be reminded of the counselling service provided by the Employee Assistance Service if needed.
- * If a school employee forms suspicions regarding the conduct of another school employee, he or she should consult the DLP. If the DLP and the school employee are satisfied that there are reasonable grounds for suspicion, the DLP will inform the Chairperson of the Board of Management and report to the Health Board.
- * In the case of allegations or suspicions of child abuse by an employee, two procedures will be followed:
 - The reporting procedure in respect of the allegation, outlined above.
 - The procedure for dealing with the employee.
- * The same person will not have the responsibility for dealing with the reporting issue and the employment issue. The DLP is responsible for reporting the matter to the HSE. While the Chairperson of the Board of Management, acting in consultation with the Board, is responsible for addressing the employment issue. Where the allegation of abuse is against the DLP, the Chairperson of the Board of Management will assume the responsibility for reporting the matter to the HSE.
- * Where a Chairperson of a Board of Management becomes aware of an allegation of abuse against a school employee, the Chairperson will privately inform the employee of the following:
 - The fact that an allegation has been made.
- * The nature of the allegation.
 - Whether or not the matter has been reported to the HSE by the DLP.
- * The employee will be given a copy of the written allegations and any other relevant documentation. The employee will be requested to respond to the allegation in writing.
- * The Chairperson will convene a Board of Management meeting. Board members will be reminded of their serious responsibilities to maintain strict confidentiality in all matters relating to the issue. The principles of due process and natural justice will be adhered. The Board of Management will consider in detail
 - The allegations which have been made against the school employee
 - The source of those allegations.
 - The advice of the HSE and An Garda Síochána in relation to the allegations.
- * The employee will be requested to attend a Board of Management meeting with a friend within a specified period of time. The employee will be told that his or her explanation to the Board of Management will be passed onto the HSE. The first priority will be to ensure that no child is exposed to unnecessary risk.

- * The Chairperson of the Board of Management will as a matter of urgency, take any necessary protective measures. These measures will be proportionate to the level of risk and will not unreasonably penalise the employee, financially or otherwise unless necessary to protect the children. If in the Chairperson’s opinion, the nature of the allegation warrants immediate action, the Chairperson on behalf of the Board of Management, directs the employee to absent him or herself from the school with immediate effect. Where the Chairperson is unsure as to whether the nature of the allegation warrants the absence of the employee from the school while the matter is being investigated, he/she should consult with the Childcare Manager of the HSE and An Garda Síochána for advice. The Chairperson will have due regard for the advice offered. Any absence by a school employee will be regarded as Administrative Leave of Absence with pay and not a suspension. Such a leave of absence will not imply any degree of guilt on the part of the school employee. Please see in Appendix a written protocol for authorising immediate action when there is a requirement for a staff member to be put on administrative leave. Where such a leave of absence is invoked, the Department of Education and Science should be contacted with regard to
 - Formal approval for the paid leave of absence of the employee
 - Department sanction for the employment of a substitute teacher.
- * It will be the responsibility of the Chairperson of the Board to maintain close contact with the HSE, to ensure that the HSE acts promptly in cases of alleged abuse involving school employees. The HSE should pass on reports and records to the employer and employee in question, where appropriate. This will assist the employer in reaching a decision as to the action to be taken in the longer term concerning the employee. Legal advice may be sought in these cases. On conclusion of any investigation the Board of Management will then determine the employment status of the employee.
- * Where an allegation or suspicion of child abuse or neglect regarding a member of the Board of Management has been reported by the DLP (or employer as above) to the HSE, the Board of Management shall inform the patron that a report involving a Board member has been submitted to the HSE. It is a matter for the patron to determine if any action is necessary regarding the member’s continued role on the Board.

Reporting of Suspected Abuse by A Person Outside the School Community

Should a person outside the school community report suspicions of abuse or neglect of a child in the school to the DLP, he or she will be advised to report their observations and suspicions directly to the HSE.

General Procedures

- * The staff have familiarised themselves with the types, signs and symptoms of child abuse. No one sign or symptom should be seen as conclusive in itself and may indicate conditions other than child abuse.
- * All teachers have received a copy of Children First.
- * Copies of the latest publication entitled “Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children” by the Department of Children and Youth Affairs and “Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools” by the DES are available in the offices and staffroom. The DLP and the DDLP, Board of Management and Parents Association Officials have been provided with copies.
- * The staff have discussed and agreed the revised policy.

- * Training
- * The child protection policy will be reviewed annually according to the checklist in the DES Circular.065/2011 All records of concern will be put in writing and filed in the Principal's filing cabinet.
- * The DLP and the teacher will communicate their concerns about a child to the teacher who has the child the following year.
- * 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 and
 - state the number of cases, since the last Board meeting, where the DLP sought advice from the HSE and as a result of this advice, no report was made, or
 - where there were no such cases at (a) or (b) above, state this fact.
- * The minutes of the Board of Management meeting shall record the above. Details of cases will not be included.
- * The Child Protection Policy is on the Agenda of the first Staff Meeting and the first Board of Management Meeting of each school year.
- * Child protection policy is listed in all our school policies.
- * The Board of Management will inform the Parents Association in writing that a review has been undertaken. A record of the review and its outcome will be made available, if requested, to the Patron and the Department.

Organisational Procedures

- * Children are supervised at all times.
- * All new parents in the school receive a copy of our Code of Behaviour and Anti-bullying Policy. They are requested to sign a form, stating that they are willing to support and co-operate with the staff in implementing the two policies effectively.
- * Children are familiarised with our Code of Behaviour and our School Rules.
- * Resource teachers may teach children on their own and therefore windows are to be inserted into their classroom doors.
- * All members of staff are advised not to travel with one child in their car. If a child needs to be brought home, this teacher is accompanied by others.
- * When classes are brought to swimming lessons at least two members of staff accompany them and they are supervised at all times.
- * The teachers monitor the attendance of the children very closely and on a monthly basis. All parents are requested to explain reasons for their child's absence. If children's absence exceeds 20 days, parents are notified and data is transferred to the National Educational Welfare Board. (See Attendance Policy for further clarification). At the beginning of the school year all teachers are given a list of all the children who were reported to the NEWB in the previous year.
- * If first aid needs to be applied to children in areas that require removing some clothes items, another member of staff will be required to be present
- * If children soil themselves the following procedures will be followed;
 - Parents will be called
 - For children with SEN, after prior consultation and agreement with the parents, the assigned SNA will attend to the child.

Cleansing items and clean clothes will be provided for the child.
Members of staff will act in loco parentis in this situation

- * Staff received Monitoring Forms for recording symptoms of Child Abuse. See Appendix C.
- * Teachers on yard duty will be aware of visitors entering the playground and will ascertain their intentions.
- * At the beginning of every year, the staff are informed of child protection cases. They will also be notified of children who are the subject of custody agreements and will be shown photographs of estranged parents.
- * If children are collected during the school day, parents are required to sign their names in the office.

Curriculum Implications

The subject Social, Personal and Health Education is taught throughout the school. The following resources are used:

- * Relationships and Sexuality in Education Programme. Teachers in the senior classes have received in-service training and this training will now continue for teachers in middle and lower classes.
- * The Stay Safe Programme is another primary resource used in this school to provide education for children. The formal lessons of the programme will be taught every second year in accordance with the SPHE two year cycle plan. However, staff will make every effort to ensure that the messages of the programme are reinforced whenever possible.

Success Criteria

- * There is a heightened awareness of Child Protection Issues and the importance of Child Protection Guidelines and their implementation at all levels of school life.
- * Child Protection is on the agenda at all BOM meetings and reviewed annually at staff meetings.
- * Staff members avail of training and other professional development opportunities in relation to Child Protection
- * Parents are informed at the beginning of each year that the school has adopted a Child Protection Policy based on guidelines and procedures in relation to Child Protection and Welfare. Parents are informed that if there is any concern in relation to the abuse of children, the school is obliged to report this to the local Health Board.
- * Parents are also informed at the beginning of each year in relation to the Educational Welfare Act 2000, that where a student is absent for part of or a full school day, that parent must notify the teacher or principal of the reason for the child's absence. If a student is absent for 20 days or more during the school year, the school authorities will inform the Educational Welfare Board.
- * Teachers are implementing a whole school plan in relation to SPHE.

Ratification & Communication

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management of S.N. Bhaile Chláir na Gaillimhe and communicated to members of the school community thereafter.

Philip Cribbin

Chairperson of Board of Management

Date: 2nd October 2017

Annual Review

Review

This policy will be reviewed in the school year 2017-2018 in line with legislation, DES Circulars, publications and in light of incidences.

APPENDIX A

CHILD PROTECTION GUIDELINES CHECKLIST FOR SCHOOL EMPLOYEES

Designated Liaison Person: Carmel Ní Bhroin

Deputy Designated Liaison Person: Éilis Áine de Raulbh

If a child discloses information to you:

- * Listen
- * Do not ask leading questions
- * Offer reassurance but do not promise not to tell
- * Explain that other adults may need to be told (D.L.P)
- * Do not stop the child speaking
- * Do not over react or comment
- * Ask if they wish to write an account of what happened. Inform D.L.P. if you have a reasonable suspicion or reasonable grounds for concern that a child is at risk or has suffered abuse. The D.L.P. should contact the Health Board for advice.
- * At the earliest opportunity, record accurately what the child said – using the child’s own words. Record date/time and context of the disclosure. Use child’s registration number – not child’s name.
- * Facts only
- * Sketch signs of physical injury if appropriate
- * Records will be kept in the Principal’s office.
- * Retain records for a period of 21 years in keeping with the school’s Record Keeping Policy

The following should also be reported to the D.L.P.

- * An account from a person who saw a child being abused
- * Injury consistent with abuse
- * Dysfunctional behaviour
- * Implausible explanations for injury or behaviour
- * Consistent evidence over a period of time that a child is being emotionally or physically neglected

Health Board Response:

- * School is asked to monitor the situation
- * Formal report is requested, sent by D.L.P. and on receipt case is allocated to Social Worker
- * Preliminary enquiry – screening process
- * Initial assessment

Possible outcomes:

- * Case closed
- * Family support
- * Child Protection Plan (usually following a case conference)

APPENDIX B

CHILD PROTECTION REPORTING PROCEDURES FOR D.L.P.

- D.L.P. receives report of child protection concern
- D.L.P. records the report – date/time/context. Child’s registration number is used for recording purposes
- D.L.P. makes decision on how to proceed based on information received
- D.L.P. informs Chairperson of Board of Management that initial contact is being made with Health Board
- D.L.P. makes contact with Health Board seeking advice. (Do not give child’s name at this point. Be very clear that you are seeking advice). Take the name of the person you spoke to and the date and record conversation.
- Duty Social Worker makes recommendation. This may involve school continuing to monitor the situation. Record this decision and send written record of this decision to Health Board.
- Alternatively a formal referral made on standard reporting form may be recommended by Social Worker. (Keep a copy on file in a secure place)
- If Health Board not available and case warrants immediate response – Gardaí are informed
- Decision made on informing/not informing parents – taking safety of the child into consideration as number one priority. A decision NOT to inform parent/s should only be made where there is genuine concern for the safety of the child. Be transparent with parent/s and ensure that they are aware that you have a non-negotiable responsibility as D.L.P. to act in the best interests of the child. (Refer to Children First)
- If D.L.P. decides not to contact Health Board in relation to the case – person who made original report must be informed – in writing
- Continued monitoring of child is recommended
- Child Protection concerns that have been reported to the Health Board is included in the Principal’s Report to Board of Management Meeting. Child’s name is not used

APPENDIX C: Checklist for Annual Review of the Child Protection Policy

The checklist is designed as an aid to conducting this review and is not intended as an exhaustive list. Individual Boards of Management may wish to include other items in the checklist that are of particular relevance to the school in question.

As part of the overall review process, Boards of Management should also assess other school policies, practices and activities vis a vis their adherence to the principles of best practice in child protection and welfare as set out in the school's child protection policy.	Y/ N
Has the Board formally adopted a child protection policy in accordance with the 'Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools'?	√
As part of the school's child protection policy, has the Board formally adopted, without modification, the 'Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools'?	√
Are there both a DLP and a Deputy DLP currently appointed?	√
Are the relevant contact details (HSE and An Garda Síochána) to hand?	√
Has the DLP attended available child protection training?	√
Has the Deputy DLP attended available child protection training?	√
Have any members of the Board attended child protection training?	√
Has the school's child protection policy identified other school policies, practices and activities that are regarded as having particular child protection relevance?	√
Has the Board ensured that the Department's "Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools" are available to all school personnel?	√
Has the Board arrangements in place to communicate the school's child protection policy to new school personnel?	√
Is the Board satisfied that all school personnel have been made aware of their responsibilities under the 'Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools'?	√
Since the Board's last annual review, was the Board informed of any child protection reports made to the HSE/An Garda Síochána by the DLP?	N/A
Since the Board's last annual review, was the Board informed of any cases where the DLP sought advice from the HSE and as a result of this advice, no report to the HSE was made?	N/A
Is the Board satisfied that the child protection procedures in relation to the making of reports to the HSE/ An Garda Síochána were appropriately followed?	N/A
Were child protection matters reported to the Board appropriately recorded in the Board minutes?	N/A
Is the Board satisfied that all records relating to child protection are appropriately filed and stored securely?	√
Has the Board ensured that the Parents' Association (if any), has been provided with the school's child protection policy?	√
Has the Board ensured that the school's child protection policy is available to parents on request?	√
Has the Board ensured that the Stay Safe programme is implemented in full in the school? (applies to primary schools)	√
Has the Board ensured that the SPHE curriculum is implemented in full in the school?	√
Is the Board satisfied that the Department's requirements for Garda Vetting have been met in respect of all school personnel (employees and volunteers)? *	√
Is the Board satisfied that the Department's requirements in relation to the provision of a child protection related statutory declaration and associated form of undertaking have been met in respect of persons appointed to teaching and non-teaching positions?*	√
Is the Board satisfied that, from a child protection perspective, thorough recruitment and selection procedures are applied by the school in relation to all school personnel (employees and volunteers)?*	√
Is the Board satisfied that the 'Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools' are being fully and adequately implemented by the school?	√
Has the Board identified any aspects of the school's child protection policy and/or its implementation that require further improvement?	√
Has the Board put in place an action plan containing appropriate timelines to address those aspects of the school's child protection policy and/or its implementation that have been identified as requiring further improvement ?	√
Has the Board ensured that any areas for improvement that that were identified in any previous review of the school's child protection policy have been adequately addressed?	√

