



Scoil Chualann - Child Protection Policy

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Child Protection Policy

Schools have an obligation to provide students with the highest possible standard of care in order to promote their well-being and protect them from harm. School personnel are especially well placed to observe changes in behaviour, failure to develop or outward signs of abuse in children.

Mindful of this primary duty of care, the Board of Management of Scoil Chualann with parents and staff have put together this policy which endorses "Children First 2011", the designated procedures for the protection and welfare of children as issued by the Department of Health and Children, and "Child Protection Guidelines and Procedures" from the Department of Education & Skills 2011.

A copy of this policy is made available to all members of staff together with a copy of "The Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools", DES.

It is the responsibility of each member of staff to be familiar with the procedures outlined in the aforementioned document.

Aims

The aims of this policy are

- To create a safe, trusting, responsible sympathetic friendly environment for all
- To provide each child with an education in personal safety which aims to help children avoid abuse
- To inform the school community with regard to child protection
- To put procedures in place which promote good practice and which protect children and staff
- To ensure that all school staff understand and are familiar with child protection procedures in Scoil Chualann
- To provide staff training in matters relating to child protection and welfare

Child Protection

The Stay Safe programme is fully implemented in Scoil Chualann and aims to help children to avoid abuse and to teach them the language and skills they need to get help if they have a problem. The programme is taught as part of the SPHE curriculum under the strand unit Safety and Protection (Personal Safety).



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When parents accept a place for their child in Scoil Chualann they are informed that the Stay Safe programme is taught as part of the SPHE curriculum. The parent's guide is given to new parents before the programme is taught.

The Stay Safe programme is integrated with other areas of the curriculum whenever possible.

The programme is taught through Irish. Every effort is made to develop and nurture the children's self-esteem. Children are encouraged to express themselves in Irish and English.

The programme is taught at the same time of the year in all classes.

The learning support and resource team aim to develop children's self-confidence and self-esteem through use of "social stories" in their classes.

Special needs assistants are mindful of the child protection policy in all dealings with special needs children not only in class but on school outings, at swimming lessons, and other school events.

Procedures

All staff (teachers, learning support staff, special needs assistants, ancillary staff) will follow procedures in relation to child protection as outlined in Children First and "Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary schools" 2011.

The Board nominates **Carmel Ní Ghairbhín** as the designated liaison person (DLP) to act as a liaison with outside agencies such as health board and as a resource person to any staff having child protection concerns.

In the absence of **Carmel Ní Ghairbhín**, **Sinéad Ní Chréan-Loinsigh**, Príomhoide tánaisteach, will act as Deputy Designated Liaison Person.

The Board of Management and staff have identified the following areas as having potential risks to children's safety and welfare.

- Physical contact
- Visitors/guest speakers to classes
- Children with toileting/physical care needs
- Accidents
- Changing clothes (games/swimming)
- Recruitment and selection of staff
- General behaviour
- Supervision of children
- Internet use



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Every effort is made to adhere to best practice in regard to the above. However should it prove impossible or impracticable to do so or in the event of an emergency a written account of the incident will be kept and the principal and parents will be informed.

Links with other policies/areas of planning

SPHE curriculum, strand unit 'Safety and Protection'.

School code of discipline

Health and Safety statement

School tour/ outing policy

Use of electronic devices – Acceptable Usage policy

School Mission Statement

Our child protection policy is in keeping with our school mission statement.

Our intention is to create a kind, happy, safe stimulating environment for all. We celebrate and nurture the unique qualities of every child. We aim to create a happy atmosphere which fosters an holistic development of the child .

Procedure

1. Staff member discusses their concern with DLP
2. The concern is recorded, signed and dated
3. Parent/ guardian is informed if necessary
4. DLP will seek advice informally from HSE social worker
5. If the matter has to be reported to the HSE the principal will inform the parent/guardian unless doing so is likely to endanger the child or place the child at further risk.
6. The standard HSE report form is complete and kept on file in a secure place

Dealing with Disclosures

1. The child will be listened to and reassured
2. The allegation will be dealt with in a sensitive way through listening to and facilitating the child to tell about the problem
3. Confidentiality must not be promised to a child making a disclosure
4. The need for action will be explained to the child
5. The DLP will report to the HSE children and family services or in the event of an emergency and the unavailability of the HSE to an Garda Síochána
6. The disclosure is recorded.
7. The parent /guardian is informed unless doing so is likely to endanger the child or place the child at further risk.



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Record Keeping

Role of DLP

1. To ensure that this policy is implemented and adhered to.
2. To ensure that staff are informed re: Child Protection Policy.
3. To liaise with staff, parents/guardians, children and the appropriate agencies.
4. To deal professionally and sensitively with any disclosures made.
5. To keep a written account of :
 - genuine concerns
 - disclosures
 - reports to HSE/An Garda Síochána
 - action taken
6. The DLP can be contacted at Scoil Chualann 01-2861388
7. Carmel Ní Ghairbhín (Principal) will liaise between the school and the HSE.

Review

This policy statement will be subject to review at the start of each academic year forthwith.

Where the Irish and English versions of this policy are at variance with one another, the Irish version is deemed to prevail.

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management, Scoil Chualann on 19/10/11



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- The Board will ensure that appropriate and on going training as necessary will be available for DLP and the DDLP.
- The board fully endorses arrangements for the vetting of teaching and non-teaching staff as outlined in Circular 0094/2006, June 2006, for the Department of Education & Skills.
- Recognising that the safety and well being of children attending the school is a priority, the Board undertakes to include Child Protection & Health & Safety matters as items on the agenda of all Board meetings forthwith.
- The Board will ensure 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.
- The Board recognises that it has two duties of care. The primary duty is the protection, safety and welfare of the children attending Scoil Chualann. The Board as an employer also has duties and responsibilities towards its employees.
- As an employer, the Board will seek legal advice if an allegation of abuse is made against a school employee.
- The Board will adhere to the protocol outlined in Ch. 4. Allegations or Suspicions of Child Abuse of School Employees, in "Child Protection Guidelines and Procedures" from the Department of Education & Skills 2011, to authorise any actions required to protect the children in its care. The Board notes that school employees may be subject to erroneous or malicious allegations. Any allegation of abuse should be dealt with sensitively. The employee should 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.
- The Board 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.
- The Board 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



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In addition, opportunities will be included in the curriculum for children to develop the skills they need to keep them safe.

- The Board undertakes to circulate this Child Protection policy statement to all parents and guardians at time of enrolment and on a regular basis thereafter. This policy statement and "Children First" will be available for viewing at the school office.
- This policy statement regarding Child Protection at Scoil Chualann applies to all staff, members of the Board of Management, volunteers and contractors working in the school.
- This policy statement will be subject to review at the start of each academic year forthwith.

Signed _____ Chairperson

_____ D.L.P

_____ Deputy D.L.P.

Date: _____



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Polasaí: Dcomhnú Páist