

Child Protection Policy of St. Mary's N.S. Bagenalstown

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. Mary's N.S., Bagenalstown 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 Sylvia Eades

3. The Deputy Designated Liaison Person (Deputy DLP) is Anne Brennan

4. In its policies, practices and activities, St. Mary's N.S. 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. The following policies, practises and activities are relevant to child protection:

Prevention: SPHE curriculum, Strand Unit on 'Safety and Protection',
The School Code of Behaviour
RSE Policy
School Attendance Policy
Garda Vetting Policy

Procedures: Anti-Bullying Policy.
Health and Safety Statement.

Practice: Swimming Code
Policy on School Trips
Mobile Phone Policy

Supervision/Playground Duty
Toileting/Intimate Care Policy
Website Policy
ICT/Acceptable Internet Usage Policy
Data Protection Policy

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.

6. This policy has been made available to school personnel and 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.

7. This policy will be reviewed by the Board of Management once in every school year.

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on _____[date]

Signed: _____

Signed: _____

Chairperson of Board of Management

Principal

Date: _____

Date: _____

Date of next review: _____

Appendices:

Appendix 1 Child Protection Guidelines Checklist for School Employees)

Appendix 2 List of Indicators – Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools

Appendix 3 Reporting procedures for DLP

Appendix 4 Activities and Practice

Appendix 4:

Activities/ Practice

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.

a) 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 developmental stage of the child

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

b) Visitors / Guest Speakers

Visitors/guest speakers should never be left alone with pupils. 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.

All scheduled and unscheduled visitors to the school (including parents, child minders etc) are expected to report to the office on arrival. Staff on yard duty will direct them to the school office. The drop-off / pick-up of children throughout the teaching day will be processed through the school office.

There is a 'sign out' sheet in the office which must be completed when children are being taken off school premises during the school day.

c) 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 member 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 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.

d) 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 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.

e) 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. Doors will be left open at all times in such situations. Work being carried out by special needs assistants will be carried out under the direction of the class teacher in an open environment.

f) 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 the communal areas and with the consent of parents. Parent volunteers will only be allowed to enter the changing rooms if the school has received satisfactory Garda clearance in his/her name.

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.

Refer to - **Swimming Code Guidelines for Parents**

g) Internet Safety and Mobile Phones:

Refer to -**ICT / Acceptable Usage Policy**

-Mobile Phone Policy

h) Pupils travelling in staff cars:

There must be three travelling in a car at all times.

i) Record Keeping:

All D.L.P. files will be stored in a secure place for confidentiality and case details will not identify the particular child.