

Child Protection Policy: Scoil Raifteirí

Foreword

The staff, parents and management of Scoil Raifteirí have developed and agreed a policy on child abuse protection which is in keeping with current proposals and guidelines.

This policy deals with the school's responsibilities in the following areas:

- a) Protection- curricular provision
- b) Customs - customs about reasons for anxiety / disclosure
- c) Practice - best practice for child protection

A copy of this policy will be provided to every staff member along with the Guidelines of Children's First and Directions and Circular 0065/2011 of the Department of Education and Science for Child Protection.

Each staff member has the responsibility to inform themselves of the 'Children First' programme and the Department's circular and guidelines for child protection to fulfil our school obligations.

Aims

The policy has the following aims:

- To create a safe, trusting, responsible and empathic environment,
- To provide education on personal safety skills which is directed specifically at child abuse protection to every child in the school
- To develop awareness and responsibility on child protection among the school community
- To promote behaviours and customs around best practice to protect children and staff
- To ascertain that the entire school staff is aware of the 'Children First' guidelines and what is the modus operandi regarding anxiousness or disclosures.
- To provide ongoing training to staff in this and other areas.

Protection

The main sources for educating children about child protection in our school are the Stay Safe, Walk Tall and RSE programmes. These programmes are taught as part of the SPHE curriculum as part of the Safety and Protection Strand Unit (Personal Safety)

When the programmes are beginning in school the parents will be informed. The lessons in the programme Stay Safe will be taught alternating with Walk Tall each second year before Easter. The RSE programme will be taught in all classes in May and June.

The staff will make every effort to enforce the messages portrayed in the lessons whenever an opportunity arises to do so.

Practice:

The entire staff (teachers, support staff, secretarial and caretaking staff etc.) will follow the proposals for reporting contained in 'Children First' and the Department's document: Guidelines and Practice for Child Protection.

The Board of Management has appointed Máire T Uí Dhálaigh (school principal) as Designated Liaison Person (DLP) and Máire Uí Shúilleabháin as Deputy Designated Liaison Person

What happens

The staff and board of management recognise the following areas as areas for concern for child protection. After discussion and interplay the staff and Board of Management accepted the following

- a) Physical contact: Physical contact will not be made with children except when absolutely necessary. E.g when it is in the child's safety interest
- b) Visitors / Guest speakers: In general the teaching staff will deliver the courses, but from time to time, or if the teacher is unable to deliver the course, it is permissible to bring in experts to school to speak to the children
- c) Children with toileting requirements / personal care requirements: This area is the responsibility of the class teacher in consultation with the child's parents and the SNA
- d) Toileting Accidents: Spare clean clothes are kept in the school storeroom. If children are upset parents are contacted
- e) Individual teaching : It is not permissible for teachers / instructors to teach individual children in rooms with the door closed
- f) Clothes changing for Games / Physical Education / Swimming. Children change in the appropriate changing rooms. Teachers / instructors may not be in changing rooms with individual children. As far as possible children wear track suit and appropriate gear on training days to avoid changing room issues.

- g) Recruitment and selection of staff: The Garda vetting system will be employed when new staff are being recruited
- h) General behaviour: The school has a code of behaviour and anti-bullying policy.
- i) Supervision of Children: A teacher constantly supervises the children.
- j) Internet Use: The school enforces an Acceptable Usage Policy which covers photographs, recognition of children etc.

Even though every effort to maintain best practice will be made, as agreed above, if it happens in a case of emergency that it is not possible or practical to enforce the policy a complete account of the incident should be registered and presented to the Principal and to the parents

Link to other policies / to planning areas:

Protection: SPHE Curriculum, Strand Unit Safety and Protection,
The school's Code of Behaviour

Customs: Code of Behaviour
Safety Statement

Practice: Swimming Policy
School Tours / Outside Events
I.T. Acceptable Usage Policy

Review and Monitoring

The Board of Management will review and monitor the policy annually or at other times as required.

The staff will be required to review this policy regularly and every effort will be made to direct the attention of new staff members to the child protection policy

The board will ensure that the appropriate training and support opportunities will be made available to the staff.

Policy accepted by the Board of Management _____

Signed: _____

Cathaoirleach