

Moneenroe National School

Roll No. 16204F



Child Protection Policy

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 Moneenroe National School has agreed the following child protection policy:

1. The Board of Management has adapted 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. The staff, parents and management of Moneenroe National School have developed and agreed this policy in line with the current recommendations and guidelines relating to child abuse prevention and child protection guidelines. This policy addresses the responsibilities of the school in the following areas:-

- A) Prevention -curriculum provision
- B) Procedures - procedures for dealing with concerns/disclosures
- C) Practice - best practice in child protection

An individual copy of this policy document and the appended section from the Department of Education and Skills Child Protection Procedures will be made available to all staff.

It is incumbent on all staff to familiarise themselves with 'Children First' and the DES child protection guidelines and procedures.

AIMS

1. This policy aims to:

Create a safe, trusting, responsive and caring environment

Provide a personal safety skills education which specifically addresses abuse prevention for all children in the school.

Develop awareness and responsibility in the area of child protection amongst the whole school community.

Put in place procedures for good practice to protect all children and staff.

Ensure that all staff members are aware of and familiar with the 'Children First' and the DES guidelines and procedures in relation to reporting concerns and/or disclosures of child abuse.

Provide for ongoing training in this and related areas for all school staff.

2. The Designated Liaison Person (DLP) is Mr. Philip Lonergan.

3. The Deputy Designated Liaison Person (Deputy) is Ms. Martha Dunphy.

4. In its policies, practices and activities, Moneenroe National School 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 reconsiderations.

Fully co-operate with 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.

5. School policies, practices and activities that are particularly relevant to child protection.

5.1 Procedures:

All staff and volunteers in the school will follow the recommendations for reporting concerns or disclosures as outlined in the DES 'Child Procedures' 2011

Maintaining Records

When child abuse is suspected, it is essential to have a record of all the information available.

Personnel should note carefully what they have observed and when they observe it.

Signs of physical injury should be described in detail and, if appropriate, sketched. Any comment by the child concerned, or by any other person, about how an injury occurred should be recorded, preferable quoting words actually used, as soon as possible after the comment has been made.

All records so created should be regarded as highly confidential and retained in a secure location in the school by the Designated Liaison Person.

The staff and management of this school have agreed:

All concerns/disclosures involving child protection/child welfare issues will be reported in the first instance to the DLP (deputy DLP where appropriate).

Each report to the DLP will be dated and signed by the person making that report.

A strict adherence to maintaining confidentiality - information regarding concerns or disclosures of abuse should only be given on a 'need to know' basis.

5.2 Prevention:

The Stay Safe programme is the primary resource used in this school to provide education for children on abuse prevention. The programme is taught as part of the schools SPHE curriculum under the strand unit Safety and protection.

On enrolment of their child, parents will be informed that the Stay Safe programme is in use in the school.

The formal lessons of the programme will be taught every year in accordance with the SPHE Programme.

Staff will make every effort to ensure that the message of the programme are reinforced whenever possible.

5.3 Practice:

The staff and Board of Management of this school have identified the following 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:

At Break Times:

One teacher supervises the children in the yard. If a child is injured, their injury is first assessed by the teacher on duty. If deemed necessary, they are then sent into the staff room, accompanied by another child. The seriousness of their injuries is re-evaluated, and first aid is administered where necessary. If a serious injury occur, the child's parents are notified and an incident form is filled in the incident report folder.

On wet days when children do not go out to the yard, the teacher on duty supervises the class groupings in their classrooms. Children remain in their seats to minimise accidents. In the case of injury, the same procedures are followed (see above).

Physical contact:

Physical contact between school personnel and the child should always be in response to the needs of the child. 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.

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 the guests is appropriate.

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 involved be 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.

Toileting accidents:

If a toileting accidents occurs, parents will be notified immediately, so that they can provide clean underwear and suitable clothing for the child.

If the pupil for whatever reason cannot clean or change themselves and the parents/guardians cannot be contacted the child will be assisted by an older sibling or 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 the principal and parents will be notified.

One to One Teaching:

It is the policy in this school that one-to-one teaching is often in the best interest of the child. Every effort will be made to ensure that this teaching takes place in an open environment. Parents of children who are to be involved in one-to-one teaching will be informed and their agreement sought. Work being carried out by special needs assistants will be carried out under the direction of the class teacher in an open environment.

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. 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.

At all times there must be adequate supervision of pupils.

While every effort will be made to adhere to best practice as agreed and outlined above, in the event of an emergency where this is not possible or practicable a full record of the incident should be made and reported to the principal and parents.

Reviewing and Monitoring:

This policy will be monitored and reviewed by the Board of Management on an annual basis in line with the DES procedures. An action plan will be drawn up to address any issues that arise from that review.

All school personnel and parents will be informed of the completion of the review.