



Child Protection Policy

Introduction

Ashbourne Educate Together National School has adopted the Department of Education and Skills Guidelines and Procedures in relation to Child Protection and Welfare. These Guidelines are laid out in the **Children First** document. This policy clarifies how our school proposes to implement these guidelines in order to ensure the protection and welfare of all children attending our school.

School Philosophy and Ethos

Children enrolled in Ashbourne Educate Together National School will be supported in reaching their full potential: mentally, spiritually, emotionally and socially. This support will be differentiated in an atmosphere and environment in which children feel safe, valued and secure and in which respect for self and others is an everyday occurrence.

Our school operates under the patronage of Educate Together. The four underlying principles of our ethos are:

- ❖ Co-educational
- ❖ Child-centred
- ❖ Multi-denominational
- ❖ Democratically run

Aims

To raise awareness of the importance of Child Protection (physical, emotional, sexual and neglect) among all school staff (including teachers, SNAs, Secretary, Ancillary Staff etc.).

To put in place clear procedures for all school personnel dealing with suspicions and allegations of child abuse.

To identify curricular content and resources, that contribute to the prevention of child abuse and to enable children to properly deal with abuse if it occurs. To promote the welfare of all pupils in our care.

Content

It is the policy of the school to follow the procedures as laid down in the Child Protection Guidelines and Procedures DES 2011 in any case where we suspect, or are alerted to, child abuse, including where a child discloses abuse. All disclosures will be documented, dated and kept on file by the DLP- Designated Liaison Person. **All disclosures will be treated in a highly confidential manner.**

The Board of Management have appointed the Principal- Barbara Nugent as the DLP in our school to have specific responsibility for child protection.

Lynn Hicks has been appointed as the Deputy DLP .

Roles and Responsibilities

- ❖ The Board of Management has primary responsibility for the care and welfare of all pupils.
- ❖ The DLP has specific responsibility for Child Protection in the school.
- ❖ All staff have a duty of care to ensure that arrangements are in place to protect children from harm.

Procedures

The procedures for dealing with allegations/suspensions/disclosures of Child Abuse are set down in the **Children First Guidelines 2011** and will be followed

Reference: Chapter Three – Basis for Reporting Concerns and Standard Reporting Procedure pages 13-17

Organisational Implications

- **Supervision**– Every effort will be made to ensure that there is comprehensive supervision of children throughout the school day. A roster of staff duty will be drawn up and displayed in the Staff Room and in the Principal's Office. Teachers will ensure that all children are visible in the school yard/ play area. Children will not leave the school yard unsupervised or engage with adults outside of the school yard. Children are not permitted to spend break times in the classroom.
- **Visitors** – All unscheduled visitors to the school are expected to report to the office upon arrival. Visitors must ring the doorbell and a member of staff will allow them to gain access. All visitors(members of outside the school community) must sign the visitors book if it is intended that they will be in the school for a significant amount of time.
- **Visitors- Speakers/Sport Coaches/Mobile services to the school-** The classroom teacher has a duty of care at all times. Class teachers will be present with their class at all times during these times.
- **Bullying** – Bullying behaviour will be addressed under our Anti-Bullying Policy. If the behaviour involved is of a sexual nature or regarded as being particularly abusive, the matter will be referred to the DLP.
- **Behaviour** – Children are encouraged at all times to play co-operatively and to show respect for themselves and others. Our Positive Behaviour Policy clarifies this.
- **Toilets** – It is school policy that only one person is allowed to enter the toilet at a time. Children who need to use the toilet during yard time must seek the permission of the teacher on yard. During yard time the closest toilet to the yard will be used A playground helper/SNA will supervise the child's trip to the toilet and will always bring another child with him or her.

- If a child has a wetting accident during the school day, a member of staff will provide them with dry clothes to change into. Before assisting the child the staff member will inform a second staff member and the second staff member will remain in the room/corridor outside the toilet area. All accidents of this nature will be reported to Parents/Guardians.

- It is school policy to call a Parent/Guardian if a child soils themselves in school and requires intimate care. In the unlikely event of failing to make contact, staff will follow the above procedure. All accidents of this nature will be reported to Parents/Guardians.

-Children with specific toileting/intimate care needs – a procedure will be agreed between the teachers, SNAs and parents in question.

- Children attending Learning Support/Resource- Children who are entitled to extra support will receive this support from the language/learning support/resource teacher. As the children in our care are in the Junior end of the school the majority of this support will take place within the classroom. Support teachers may also withdraw small groups for extra support. In certain cases children may require one on one support. The learning support room has a glass window so that everything is visible from the corridor. Parents/guardians of children who are in receipt of support must sign a permission slip to allow their child receive this extra support.

Garda Vetting

- Garda vetting of teaching and non-teaching staff as outlined in DES circular 63/2010 is mandatory for the recruitment and selection of all staff.

Internet Use

- An Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) will be implemented in the school.

Mobile Phones

- Our Mobile Phone Policy states that phones may not be used by pupils at any time during the school day, on the school grounds. Teachers/Classroom staff may not use their phone during teaching time.
- **Staff Cars** – In instances where a staff car must be used to transport a child, children should never be taken alone.
- **School Tours/Trips** – School staff accompanying children on school tours/trips (including after school sporting events) will deliver a duty of care appropriate with the trip/venue. The higher the risk factor, the higher the number of teachers/responsible adults involved. Hired buses/vehicles must provide safe transportation and a functioning seatbelt for every child/adult.
- **Induction of Teachers and Ancillary Staff** –It is the responsibility of the DLP to inform all new teachers and ancillary staff of the Children First Guidelines.
- **Attendance** –School attendance is monitored carefully. We will issue a letter relating to a child's poor attendance, and inform The NEWB-National Educational Welfare Board if a child is absent for more than twenty days.
- **Curricular Implications**
 - The Stay Safe Programme will be taught throughout the school.

- The SPHE Programme will be supported by the Walk Tall Programme and the RSE Programme.
- Our Learn Together Programme will also enhance the children's learning regarding personal safety.

Cultural Relativism

While we are aware that physical chastisement or punishment may be acceptable in some cultures, it is not tolerated in Irish society. Ashbourne Educate Together National School cannot permit cultural differences to impede our legal obligation to follow the Child Protection Guidelines (2011)

Ashbourne Educate Together National School Child Protection Policy

Code of Good Professional Practice

1. In the event of a child disclosing information, indicating child abuse, the teacher reassures the child that s/he has been very brave in sharing this information and that s/he has done the right thing.
2. The teacher informs the child that s/he (the teacher) cannot keep the information a secret and that the information will need to be shared with other people who can help.
3. The teacher records the information, as given by the child, using direct quotes when possible. ONLY facts are recorded. The record is dated and signed by the teacher. The teacher will use the child's Roll Number and must never use the child's name.
4. The teacher, at his/her earliest opportunity, communicates the disclosure to the DLP or the Deputy DLP. The teacher supports his/her verbal account of the child's disclosure with the written report referred to in 3 above. A written record of this information handover is made by the teacher in the Principal's Office.
5. Following the receipt of the disclosure from the teacher concerned, the DLP will follow the appropriate steps as outlined in the Department of Education and Skills Child Protection Guidelines and Procedures.
6. Confidentiality, as appropriate, applies in all instances.

Ratified by the Board of Management on : 3rd April 2014

Signed: Noel Gildea
Noel Gildea (Chairperson)

Signed: Barbara Nugent
Barbara Nugent (Principal and DLP)