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Caherline National School

Child Protection Policy

Revision	Date	Description	Approved
MARCH 2021	12/04/2021	Child Protection	✓
SEPT 2021	09/2021		

"Judge each day not by the harvest, but by the seeds you sow."

1.0 Introductory Statement

The staff, parents and management of Caherline National School (CNS) have developed this policy in line with the current recommendations and guidelines relating to child abuse prevention and child protection guidelines, as outlined in *Children First – National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017*. A copy of the school's child protection policy which includes the names of the Designated Liaison Person (DLP), Gearóid Power and Deputy DLP, Lisa Riordan is made available to all school personnel and the Parents' Association, and is readily accessible to parents on request. The name of the DLP is displayed in a prominent position near the main entrance of Caherline NS.

In addition to informing the school authority of those cases where a report involving a child in the school has been submitted to the HSE, the DLP shall also inform the school authority of cases where the DLP sought advice from the HSE and as a result of this advice, no report was made. At each Board of Management Meeting the principal's report shall include the number of all such cases and this shall be recorded in the minutes of the board meeting.

The Board of Management will make arrangements to inform school personnel that the review has been undertaken. Written notification, that the review has been undertaken shall be provided to the Parents' Association. A record of the review and its outcome shall be made available, if requested, to the patron and the Department.

This policy addresses the responsibilities of the school in the following areas:

- a) Prevention – curriculum provision
- b) 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 Science (DES) Child Protection Guidelines and Procedures will be made available to all staff. It is incumbent on all staff to familiarise themselves the 'Children First' and the DES Child Protection Guidelines and Procedures and to have a copy of the TUSLA certificate in their classroom.

2.0 Aims

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.

3.0 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 (Personal safety).

The formal lessons of the programme will be taught in their entirety every second year in accordance with the SPHE two-year cycle plan.

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

- It is envisaged that by rotating the programme every 2 years that each child in CNS will have to opportunity to experience the programme.
- Parental request opt-out will be available.
- Children who are opted-out will go to another classroom for supervision and work provided by teacher.

- Separate provision will be made for children with special educational needs if deemed necessary or if parent requests.
- Differentiation if necessary and extra tuition by resource teacher where necessary

4.0 Procedures

All staff (teachers, SNA's, ancillary staff, secretarial, caretaking etc.) in this school will follow the recommendations for reporting concerns or disclosures as outlined in '*Children First – National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017*'.

(See attached appendix pages 5 to 20 for the above DES guidelines).

The Board of Management of Caherline National School has appointed:

Gearóid Power as the Designated Liaison Person (DLP) and
Lisa Riordan as the deputy DLP.

5.0 Practice

The staff and BOM of Caherline National School have identified the following as areas of specific concern in relation to child protection. Following discussion and consultation the staff and BOM have agreed that the following practices be adopted:

- a) Physical contact: All staff act in 'loco parentis' and as such will act as a prudent parent does.
- b) Visitors / Guest Speakers: The teacher must always be present.
- c) Children with specific toileting/intimate care needs: Letter from parent (format in school) e.g. David needs to be assisted in going to the toilet etc. Signed by parent and SNA.
- d) Toileting accidents: In the event of toileting accidents every effort is made to contact parent, who cleans in accident situation. If no parent available, teacher/SNA to do what is necessary. Two adults will be present for any toiletry cleaning.

- e) One-to-One Teaching: High visibility – glass or open door.
- f) Changing for Games/PE/Swimming: Male/female supervision.
- g) Recruitment and selection of staff: Vetting
- h) General conduct
- i) Supervision of pupils: See Supervision policy.
- j) Internet Use – Acceptable Use Policy – Use of Photos etc.

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.

6.0 Links to other policy/planning areas.

Prevention: SPHE curriculum, strand unit on 'safety and protection',
The school code of discipline.

Procedures: Code of Behaviour
Health and Safety Statement

Practice: Swimming Policy
School Tours/Outings
IT- Acceptable Use Policy

7.0 Action Plan

- One staff member every term will attend a Child Protection training session. This staff member will report back and inform staff of changes.
- Each member of staff will be made aware of the signs of child abuse. They will then follow due procedure as outlined in our school policy.
- Contact details of the HSE and Garda Síochána will be readily available.

- The names of the DLP and the Deputy DLP will be displayed inside the front entrance.

8.0 Review and Monitoring

This policy will be monitored and reviewed by the BOM on an annual basis and when the need arises. Staff will be requested on annually to review the school policy in this area and every effort will be made to ensure that the attention of all new staff is drawn to the school child protection policy. The BOM will ensure that adequate training and support is provided for all staff.

9.0 Organisational Implications

School procedures already in place and new procedures being put in place will be examined with reference to the Children First Guidelines and any Child Protection issues that may arise will be addressed.

The following policies have been addressed in this review:

- Accidents
- Attendance
- Behaviour
- Bullying
- Children travelling in staff cars
- Communication
- Induction of all new staff
- Induction of pupils
- Record keeping
- Supervision
- Swimming
- Visibility
- Visitors

9.1 Accidents

While every precaution will be taken under our Health and Safety Statement to ensure the safety of children, we realise that accidents will happen. Accidents will be noted in our Incident Book and will be addressed under our accident policy as part of Health and Safety.

9.2 Attendance

Our school attendance will be monitored as per our attendance policy. With regards to child protection we will pay particular attention to trends in non-attendance. We will also monitor non-attendance in correlation with signs of neglect/physical/emotional abuse.

9.3 Behaviour

Children are encouraged at all times to play co-operatively and inappropriate behaviour will be addressed under our Code of Behaviour. If an incident occurs which we consider to be of a sexualised nature, we will notify the DLP who will record it and respond to it appropriately.

9.4 Bullying

Bullying behaviour will be addressed under our Anti-Bullying policy. If the behaviour involved is of a sexualised nature or regarded as being particularly abusive then the matter will be referred to the DLP.

9.5 Children travelling in staff cars

Members of school staff will not carry children alone in their cars at any time.

9.6 Communication

Every effort will be made to enhance pupil-teacher communication. If pupils have concerns they will be listened to sympathetically. The SPHE/Oral Language/RE programmes allow for open pupil-teacher communication, which is hoped will aid the pupil-teacher relationship. If teachers have to communicate with pupils on a one-to-one basis, they are requested to leave the classroom door open.

9.7 Induction of Teachers and Ancillary Staff

The DLP will be responsible for informing all new teachers and ancillary staff of the Children First Guidelines (1999). The DLP will give a copy of Chapters 3 and 4 and Appendix 1 and this Child Protection Policy to all new staff. All new teachers are expected to teach the objectives in the SPHE programme. Gearóid Power is responsible for the mentoring of new teachers and will be responsible for supporting new teachers as they implement the SPHE objectives. Gearóid Power is also responsible for ensuring that new teachers know how to fill in the Aladdin online Roll book correctly and informing the teacher of record keeping procedures within the school.

9.8 Induction of Pupils

All parents and children will be made aware of attendance rules and their implications as outlined in the Education Welfare Act (2018). All parents will be informed of the programmes in place in the school that deal with personal development e.g. RSE, Walk Tall and SPHE. All new parents are given a copy of the school's enrolment policy, which outlines the procedures parents and children should use when contacting the school if there are absences or concerns of an educational/personal/family matter. Parents are encouraged to make an appointment with the class teacher/principal if they wish to discuss their child's progress. All parents are given a copy of the school's Code of Behaviour and Anti-Bullying policies. Parents of new students coming into the school will be given a copy of above.

9.9 Record Keeping

Teachers will keep each child's file updated with results of assessments carried out, dates and details of meetings with parents and notes from parents. The records are kept in the filing cabinet in the school office, which is locked at all times. Roll books will be updated daily. Sensitive information regarding children will be shared on a 'need-to-know' basis. All educational files of pupils who no longer attend this school are kept in storage.

9.10 Supervision

School supervision policy will be followed by all staff to ensure that there is comprehensive supervision of children at all breaks (see rota in staff room). A rota will also be displayed to cover teacher absences. (See Supervision Policy)

9.11 Swimming

Children will be brought by bus to the swimming pool. Children will line up in an orderly manner for the bus as stated in our dismissal policy in the schools Health and Safety Statement. Teachers will act in 'loco parentis' and as such will act as prudent parents in helping children return to school as dry as possible.

9.12 Visibility

Teachers will ensure that children are visible in the schoolyard. Children will not be allowed to spend time in classrooms, toilets or sheds where they would not be under adult supervision. They are not to leave the school yard without permission or to engage with adults who are outside of the school yard.

9.13 Visitors

Teachers on yard duty will be aware of visitors entering the schoolyard and will ascertain their intentions. They will be supervised in the discharge of their business.

9.14 Parent

All parents will make an appointment before meeting with teachers. Doors from the yard to the classroom will be kept closed at all times. Only staff with knowledge of the code will be able to enter the building through these doors. All others must enter through the reception area. Parents will not be allowed to enter the classroom during school hours.

10.0 Curriculum Implications

10.1 Introduction

In Caherline National School all children will be cherished and in fulfilling the general aims of the Primary Curriculum we will:

- Enable the child to live a full life as a child and to realise his or her potential.
- Enable the child to develop as a social being through living and co-operating with others and so contribute to the good of society.
- Prepare the child for further education and lifelong learning.

In endeavouring to realise these aims we will create a positive school climate which is open, inclusive, respectful, fair, democratic and tolerant and which seeks to support the holistic development of all children and all adults working with our children. The strategies we will use to create this environment are detailed in our SPHE Plan and will involve:

- Creating a heal-promoting physical environment
- Enhancing self esteem
- Fostering respect for diversity
- Building effective communication within the school
- Developing appropriate home-school communication
- Catering for individual needs
- Developing democratic process
- Fostering inclusive and respectful language

We strive to ensure that our school will be physically and emotionally safe and we will delivery the curricular content of our SPHE programme with a view to giving our children the protective skills of self-esteem and assertiveness. The circle time and bubble time methodologies will be used on a whole school basis. Co-operative interpersonal skills will be developed through working in pairs and working in groups. Older children will be encouraged to work positively with conflict, negotiation and consensus building skills developed.

10.2 Junior and Senior Infants

Infant teachers will teach content objectives as stated under the 10 strand units in our SPHE programme. They are:

- Self identity
- Taking care of my body
- Growing and changing
- Safety and protection
- Making decisions
- Myself and my family
- My friends and other people

- Relating to others
- Developing citizenship
- Zippy Friends programme

These strand units will enable children to develop assertiveness, body integrity, skills relating to self-care, respect for others, identification of feelings and skills necessary to recognise and tell of abuse. The SPHE programme would be supported using the Walk Tall resources, our Grow in love programme and Stay Safe resources.

10.3 1st and 2nd Class

The ten strand units named above will enable the children to develop skills, knowledge and attitudes pertaining to self-esteem, esteem for others and the environment and skills pertaining to self-care and disclosure. Healthy eating, positive attitudes to drug use and anti-bullying awareness will be introduced.

The SPHE programme will be supported by using the Walk Tall resources, our Grow in Love programme, North Western Health Board materials and the Stay Safe Programme.

10.4 3rd and 4th Class

Our SPHE programme will again be implemented according to the ten strand units. Knowledge, skills and attitudes developed in previous classes will be built on. Children will be enabled to develop intra-personal skills and inter-personal skills. As children mature they will be challenged to develop their decision making skills. They will be encouraged to develop self-protection skills pertaining to smoking and alcohol. Peer pressure and the influence of the media will also be examined. The development of self-esteem, esteem for others, assertiveness, awareness of feelings, and skills around self-protection and disclosure will underpin our teaching.

Our SPHE programme will be supported by the use of Walk Tall resources, Prim-Ed anti-bullying materials, RSE materials and the Stay Safe programme.

10.5 5th and 6th Class

Our SPHE programme will be implemented according to the curricular objectives as stated under the ten strands in the SPHE Revised Primary Curriculum. Skills,

knowledge and attitudes developed in earlier classes will be enhanced. Children will continue to develop self-awareness and positive attitudes to themselves, others, their environment and wider world in which they live. Self-protection and respect for others will be fostered, decision-making skills developed, peer influence and media bias examined. Knowledge of drugs and positive attitudes to drug use will be further developed. Children will be enabled to develop good group-building skills, anti-bullying awareness and conflict resolution skills. Self-protection will be emphasised and protection of younger, less able people. Positive attitudes to sexuality will be developed and respect for self and others fostered (see RSE policy).

The SPHE programme will be supported by the use of the Walk Tall materials, RSE resources, Stay Safe resources and North Western Health Board resources.

11.0 Policy Ratification

Compiled in consultation with teachers, SNAs, pupils (Student Council) parents/guardians (email survey).

Appendix 1

Department of Education and Science – ‘Child Protection, Guidelines and Procedures’ – Pages 5 to 20 are available to view in the Principal’s office. Or can be downloaded using the following link:

- http://www.education.ie/servlet/blobServlet/padmin_child_protection.pdf