

## **Child Protection Policy**

### **Kiltiernan National School**

#### **Introductory Statement**

The staff, management and parents of Kiltiernan N.S. have 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

A copy of this policy will be made available to all staff members. It is incumbent on all staff to familiarise themselves with 'Children First' and the DES Child Protection Guidelines and Procedures.

#### **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 of 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 a child
- Provide for on-going training in this and related areas for school staff where necessary

### **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 school's 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. In the years 'Stay Safe' is not taught, 'Growing and Changing' and 'Taking Care of our Bodies' will be covered in SPHE to continue to promote awareness of safety.

Due to the sensitivity of some areas of the programme, SPHE classes will be taught at age appropriate levels and classes will be grouped as such: 1) Infants 2) First and Second Classes 3) Third and Fourth Classes 4) Fifth and Sixth Classes Staff will make every effort to ensure that the messages of the programme are reinforced whenever possible.

On enrolment of their child, parents will receive a letter stating that the DLP is obliged to report on-going concerns/ disclosures to the HSE.

### **Procedures**

All staff in this school will follow the recommendations for reporting concerns or disclosures as outlined in 'Children First' and the Department of Education and Science document Child Protection Guidelines and Procedures (See attached Appendix, pages 5-20 from the above DES guidelines)

The Board of Management of Kiltiernan N.S. has appointed Edel Leech as the Designated Liaison Person (DLP) AND Bríd Fenlon as the deputy DLP.

Reports will be kept by the school until the child has turned 21.

### **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:

- a) Visitors / Guest speakers. Class teacher will supervise when there are visitors/ guest speakers.
- b) Children with specific toileting/ intimate care needs. The principal and class teacher will sit down with parents and agree on procedures together.
- c) Physical contact. Some physical contact between staff and children is inevitable in school life. Contact is to be appropriate, and where possible, another adult is to accompany teacher.
- d) Toileting Accidents. Where possible, the teacher will encourage the child to change themselves. If more help is needed, the older sibling may be called to assist in appropriate cases. Where adult supervision is

necessary, two adults should be present. If this is not possible, the teacher should have other children in the room with the door open.

- e) Changing for swimming: A male and female adult will supervise changing before and after swimming.
- f) After school Classes. Teachers are to be vetted. Supervisors will be present in the school during after school classes.
- g) Internet Usage. Kiltiernan N.S. has an Acceptable Use Policy in place.

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.

### **Links to other policy/ planning areas**

Prevention: SPHE curriculum, Strand Unit on 'Safety and Protection', The School Code of Discipline

Procedures: Code of Discipline/ Behaviour Health and Safety Statement

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

### **Review and Monitoring**

This policy will be monitored and reviewed every two years and when the need arises. Staff will be requested on a regular basis 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 child protection policy. The board of management will ensure that adequate training and support is provided for all staff where necessary.

**Letter issued to parents outlining the school's role and responsibilities re. Child Protection.**

Dear Parents/ Guardians,

In recent years, as a society, we have become very aware of the problem of child abuse through neglect, emotional, physical or sexual abuse.

Each one of us has a duty to protect children, and *Children First*, the National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children noted that teachers, who are the main care givers to children outside the family, are particularly well placed to observe and monitor children for signs of abuse.

In response to this, the Department of Education and Science published Guidelines and Procedures for all schools in relation to child protection and welfare. These guidelines promote the safety and welfare of all children and are to be welcomed.

The Board of Management of Kiltiernan N.S. has adopted these guidelines as school policy. Consequently, if school staff suspect or are alerted to possible child abuse, they are obliged to refer this matter to the Health Service Executive

(HSE). The HSE will then assess the situation and provide support for the child concerned.

*Children First*, the National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children, may be accessed on the website of the Department of Health and Children ([www.dohc.ie](http://www.dohc.ie)) and the Department of Education and Science Child Protection Guidelines can be read on the Department's website ([www.education.ie](http://www.education.ie)). Parents /Guardians are also welcome to look through the guidelines here at the school.

Board of Management

Kiltiernan N.S.

