

Child Protection Policy.

The Staff, parents and Board of Management of the North Dublin National School Project have developed and agreed this policy in line with the current recommendations and guidelines relating to child abuse prevention and child protection guidelines. The document has been drawn up in response to the provisions in The Education Act 1998 and the Child Welfare Act 2000.

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

Prevention - curricular provision

Procedures - procedures for dealing with concerns / disclosures

Practice - best practice in child protection

An individual copy of this policy document, a copy of the Department of Education and Science "Child Protection Guidelines and Procedures" 2001 and "Children First" Department of Health and Children 1999 will be made available to all Staff. Staff members are expected to familiarise themselves with these guidelines.

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

Objective.

The objective of this policy is that the school would help to:

- * develop children's self esteem, assertiveness and self protective skills
- * teach children that they should always tell an adult about any situation which they find unsafe, upsetting, threatening, dangerous or abusive

- * give children the skills necessary to enable them to recognise and resist abuse / victimisation / bullying
- * teach the rules -
 - 1) Say No, Get Away and Tell
 - 2) Never Keep Touch a Secret

Programmes:

The Core Curriculum and the Stay Safe Programme (and others - being used at the discretion of the class teacher).

Prevention.

The Stay Safe Programme is the primary resource used in the NDNISP to provide education for children on abuse prevention. The programme is taught as part of the schools' Social Personal and Health Education (SPHE) curriculum under the strand unit Safety and Protection.

On enrolment of their child parents are given copies of the school policy and made fully aware that the Stay Safe and RSE Programmes are taught in the school.

The content and strategy of the Stay Safe Programme will be taught within the context of the SPHE programme, alongside the RSE (Relationships and Sexuality Education) programme and within the context of the Core Curriculum of the NDNISP.

Procedures.

The RSE Policy of the NDNISP is made clear to all teachers applying for positions in the school. All teachers are expected to teach the content and strategies of the Stay Safe Programme alongside the RSE programme. Implementation of the Stay Safe Programme is school policy.

All staff (teachers, SNAs, ancillary, secretarial, caretaking etc) in the NDNISP 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".

The Board of Management of this school has appointed Sally Sheils as the Designated Liaison Person (DLP), and Caitríona Denham as the deputy DLP.

The Staff and Management of the NDNISP have agreed that:

- * 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. Giving information to those who need to have that information for the protection of the child who may have been or who has been abused, is not a breach of confidentiality.
- * The DLP has specific responsibility for child protection and will represent the school in all dealings with Health Boards, An Garda Síochána and other parties in connection with allegations of abuse.
- * All matters pertaining to the processing or investigation of child abuse should be processed through the DLP.
- * The DLP who is submitting a report to the Health Board or An Garda Síochána should inform a parent / guardian unless doing so is likely to endanger the child or place that child at further risk. A decision not to inform a parent / guardian should be briefly recorded together with the reasons for not doing so.

Practice

The Staff and Board of Management of the NDNISP 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:

General Conduct.

School personnel are advised to ensure that any physical contact between them and a child is in response to the child’s needs and not the need of the adult. Where a child seeks physical contact to reassure them, comfort them or assist them this will be given in an open way - never secretive. Where children receive one - to - one teaching or care it is always in a room that is overlooked. The privacy of children in the school is protected as far as possible including ensuring that there is no informal discussion or comment about children in the Staff Room.

Toileting.

Teachers will encourage children to change their clothes in circumstances where they deem it a health and safety issue. There is an expectation that parents will have their child trained to use the toilet and the toilet paper appropriately. It is not expected that teachers would need to be involved in this. Where a child has an “accident” they are given a clean set of clothes. The school has sets of full changes for all age groups. Where a child is able to change themselves they are expected to do so. Where they seek help and the adult deems it necessary, either the teacher, the Principal or the school secretary help. It is not school policy to get other children to help. Where there is a childcare assistant or a special needs assistant he / she may be asked to help either. Where a child will have consistent needs in the area of intimate care a procedure will be agreed with the parents. Parents will be informed if a child soils themselves or if they wet repeatedly –ie more than twice in a week.

Internet and Mobile Phone Safety.

Within school the internet has security on it to prevent anyone accessing inappropriate sites on any computer in the building. Talks are organised for parents from time to time in relation to internet and technology safety - including mobile phones.

Mobile phones are to be kept, switched off, in the bottom of school bags during school hours. If this rule is broken then the Principal confiscates the phone until an arrangement is made with the child’s parent re returning the phone.

As appropriate children in older classes are given advice about internet and mobile phone safety. Children are advised to tell an adult if they receive messages that make them feel uncomfortable.

Swimming.

Where swimming is during school hours the policy is that no parent is ever on their own with children in a changing room. Children are expected to be able to change themselves unaided.

Garda Vetting.

Providers of all out of school activities held on the school premises or organised under the auspices of the school are Garda vetted. as are all auxiliary staff.

Review and Monitoring

This policy will be monitored and reviewed by the Board of Management on a regular basis and when the need arises. The Board of Management will ensure that adequate training / information and support is provided for all staff, parents and Board of Management members. Last review September, 2014.