

Ballyduff National School, Kilmeaden, Co. Waterford, X91 Y510.

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Roll Number: 13635R

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**Child Protection Procedures**

The staff, parents and management of Ballyduff National School have developed and agreed these procedures 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:

* **Prevention** – ie. curriculum provision
* **Procedures** for dealing with concerns and disclosures
* **Practice** – best practice in child protection

An individual copy of this policy document will be made available to all staff. It is incumbent on all staff to familiarize themselves with the “Children First” Guidelines and the DES child protection guidelines and procedures. A review of procedures will be undertaken with staff at the first staff meeting each year. Training for staff will be accessed when available.

**Aims:**

This policy aims to:

* Create a safe, trusting, responsive and caring environment
* Provide 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 DES guidelines and procedures in relation to reporting concerns and disclosures of child abuse.
* Provide for on-going training in this and related areas for all school staff

**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 children, parents will be informed that the Stay Safe programme is in use in the school. The formal lessons of the programme will be taught in March in every class every second year. Staff will make every effort to ensure that the messages of the programme are reinforced whenever possible.

**Procedures:**

As the welfare of the child is of paramount importance, the school is legally obliged to follow the national “Children First” guidelines which means that we must inform the Health Board of any concerns we have in relation to child protection.

All staff in this school will follow the recommendations for reporting concerns or disclosures as outlined in “Children First” and the DES document “Child Protection, Guidelines and Procedures”. As an employer, the Board will seek legal advice if an allegation of abuse is made against an employee.

The Board of Management has appointed Fionnuala Power (Principal) as the Designated Liaison Person (DLP) and Mary Brennan (Deputy Principal) as deputy DLP.

* All concerns/disclosures involving child protection/child welfare issues will be reported in the first instance to the DLP or deputy where appropriate
* Each report to the DLP will be dated and signed by the person making that report.
* In the interests of confidentiality, information regarding concerns or disclosures should only be given on a “need to know” basis

**Practice:**

Physical Contact between school personnel and the child should always be in response to the needs of the child and not the needs of the adult. 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
* It is appropriate to 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 and Guest Speakers :**

Visitors and Guest Speakers should never be left alone with pupils. The principal and teachers have a responsibility to check out the credentials of the visitor/guest speaker and to ensure that the material in use by guests is appropriate.

**Toileting:**

In all situations where a pupil needs assistance with toileting/intimate care, parental consent must first be sought. Two members of staff will be present when dealing with intimate care/ toileting needs. Clean underwear and suitable clothing will be kept in the school so that if a pupil has an “accident” of this nature, they will be offered fresh clothing into which they can change. If the pupil is unable to change him/herself, and the parents/guardians cannot be contacted, the child will be assisted by two members of staff familiar to her/him. A record of the incident will be kept by the teacher and parents will be notified.

Parents of children who regularly need help with toileting eg. Pre-school children, will sign a permission slip for the purpose.

**One-to-one Teaching:**

It is school policy 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. Classroom doors have a viewing panel for this purpose. Parents will be informed that the child is being taught on an individual basis. Work with S.N.A.s will be carried out under the direction of the class teacher in an open environment.

**Changing for P.E./Games/Swimming:**

Pupils are expected to dress and undress themselves for P.E., games and swimming. Where assistance is needed, this will be done in the communal areas and with the consent of the parents. Under no circumstances will staff assist a child to dress/undress 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.

Where every effort will be made to adhere to the practice 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 principal and parents.

**Review and Monitoring:**

This policy will be monitored and reviewed by the Board of Management on an annual basis and when the need arises. The Board of management will ensure that adequate training and support is provided for all staff.

*This policy was adopted by the B.O.M. of Ballyduff N.S. on the 22/02/10 and is reviewed annually.*

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Rev. Michael O’ Byrne, P.P. , Chairperson BoM