



Scoil Mhuire Moynalty

Child Protection Policy

The Board of Management of Scoil Mhuire Moynalty recognises that child protection and welfare considerations permeate all aspects of school life and must be reflected in all of the school's policies, practices and activities. In accordance with the requirements of the **Department of Education and Skills' Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools**, the Board of Management of Scoil Mhuire Moynalty has agreed the following child protection policy:

1. The Board of Management has adopted and will implement fully and without modification the **Department's Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools** as part of this overall child protection policy.
2. The **Designated Liaison Person (DLP)** is Denise Ward
3. The **Deputy Designated Liaison Person (Deputy DLP)** Rosemarie Ormiston
4. As per the **Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools** a report will be made at each Board of Management meeting re. Child protection reports to the H.S.E and also a report on the number of occasions advice was sought from the H.S.E
5. In its policies, practices and activities, Scoil Mhuire will adhere to the following principles of best practice in child protection and welfare:

The school will

- recognise that the protection and welfare of children is of paramount importance, regardless of all other considerations;
- fully co-operate with the relevant statutory authorities in relation to child protection and welfare matters;
- adopt safe practices to minimise the possibility of harm or accidents happening to children and protect workers from the necessity to take unnecessary risks that may leave themselves open to accusations of abuse or neglect;
- develop a practice of openness with parents and encourage parental involvement in the education of their children and fully respect confidentiality requirements in dealing with child protection matters.

School policies practices and activities relevant to child protection

- A copy of this policy will be kept on file in the school office, in the Principal's office and in each teacher's *Blue Policies Folder* in the classrooms together with a copy of the **Child Protection Procedures for Primary Schools 2011**.
- A copy of the policy will be given to the Board of Management, Parents' Association, S.N.A. and ancillary staff.
- A copy of the policy will be uploaded on the school's website at a later stage.
- All staff will receive child protection training on a regular basis- Staff training has been requested from Father Brendan Ludlow.
- The following policies in the school are relevant to the area of child protection *Health and Safety Statement; Enrolment Policy; Code of Discipline, Anti Bullying , S.P.H.E., P.E. (to include swimming), Administration of Medicines, and Field Trips & School Outings policies.*
- The *Stay Safe Programme* which is now mandatory, is the primary resource used in the school to provide education for children on abuse prevention. The programme is taught as

part of the schools *S.P.H.E* programme under the strand unit *Safety and Protection*. The whole school will undertake doing the *Stay Safe Programme* at the same time each year. Parents will be notified of this in advance. Parents will be requested to talk to their children about the various topics and strategies learned about & will be requested to complete the worksheets that accompany the lesson with their child, sign and return them to the school.

- All staff will have a copy of the step by step procedures to adhere to in the case of a disclosure as laid down by the **Child Protection Procedures For Primary Schools 2011**
- Each report to the D.L.P. or Deputy D.L.P. will be dated and signed by the person making that report. However if the report is made by a child the D.L.P. or Deputy D.L.P. will record the report or disclosure in the manner recommended under the **Child Protection Procedures For Primary Schools 2011**
- There will be a strict adherence to maintaining confidentiality. Information regarding concerns or disclosures of abuse should only be given on a **need to know** basis.

6. The following areas have been considered by the staff and Board of Management of the school as areas of specific concern in relation to child protection. Following discussion and consultation with the staff, we have agreed that the following practices be adopted.

1) Recruitment and selection of staff

When recruiting staff and volunteers the school needs to satisfy itself that they select people of the highest calibre insofar as can be determined. While correct procedures must always be followed in relation to advertising, interviewing and the selection of staff, other practices should also be considered.

All applicants should be required to supply in writing information which includes:

- Appropriate personal details – address, PPS number etc.;
- A resume of past and current work/volunteering experience, indicating relevant qualifications or skills acquired;
- At least two written references including addresses and telephone numbers of referees.

Verification of references will be sought through making verbal contact with the referees.

Garda vetting, is compulsory for all employees and volunteers that work within the school but it is important to note that vetting is not in itself a complete safeguard, as many perpetrators of abuse are not known to the authorities.

As an additional safeguard, the child protection related Statutory Declaration (Appendix 2 – Circular 63/2010), must be provided by all persons being appointed to teaching and non-teaching positions of any duration. In addition the associated undertaking must be signed by all persons prior to commencing employment of any duration. (Note: The Statutory Declaration and Form of undertaking are regarded as valid for other appointments in the school if signed with the same or previous calendar year.)

2) General Conduct

It is imperative in all our dealings with the children in our care that a balance is struck between the rights of the child and the need for intervention. In general any physical contact between school personnel and a child should be in response to the needs of the child. While physical contact can be used to comfort, reassure or assist a child the following should be factors in assessing its appropriateness:

- It is acceptable to the child concerned;
- It is open and not secretive;
- It is appropriate to the age and developmental stage of the child.

School personnel should not do things of a personal nature for a child which the child can do for him/herself. Inappropriate physical contact also includes rough physical play and horseplay (tickling, wrestling etc.)

All children should be treated with equal respect – favouritism is not acceptable.

School personnel should never engage in or allow:

- The use of inappropriate language or behaviours e.g. sarcasm;
- Physical punishment of any kind;
- Sexually provocative games or sexually suggestive comments about or to a child;
- The use of sexually explicit or pornographic material etc.

All media products (DVDs, CDs etc.) should be checked for their appropriateness with regards to age and suitability. Where a doubt exists in this regard, principal, parents and Board of Management should be consulted as necessary.

It is incumbent on the Board of Management that all school personnel are familiar with the DES guidelines on child protection and to ensure that they are adhered to in the event of concerns or disclosures around child protection. The DLP should be notified promptly of any concerns with regard to the behaviour of a staff member or any allegations of abuse made by a child or an adult.

3) Toileting/Intimate Care (Children with specific toileting/intimate care needs)

Normally a child with specific toileting needs will have a Special Needs Assistant assigned to him or her. After the child is enrolled in the school a meeting will be convened at which all school personnel involved with the child will attend along with the child's parents. At that meeting the needs of the child should be addressed and agreement reached as to how the school can meet those needs. It is important that those involved in the intimate care needs of the child agree practices which are acceptable to the staff, the child and the parents.

Scoil Mhuire has an updated '*Intimate Care Needs Policy*' in line with best practice to deal with such circumstances.

These practices should be sufficiently flexible to cover unforeseen situations, e.g. if personnel involved in assisting the child are absent. The Board of Management should be made aware of the practices agreed.

Toileting Accidents -Toileting accidents are not uncommon particularly at junior level, and it is therefore prudent that schools address how these situations will be dealt with in the school. Clean underwear and suitable clothing will be kept in the school so that if a pupil has an 'accident' of this nature they will in the first instance be offered fresh clothing into which they can change.

If the pupil, for whatever reason cannot clean or change themselves, the parents/guardians will be contacted to come and assist the child.

4) Changing for PE and swimming or other sports

In our school parents are requested to ensure that their children wear suitable clothing and footwear on days when they have PE, games or swimming. Pupils will be expected to dress and undress themselves for games/PE/swimming. Where assistance is needed this will be done in the communal areas and with the consent of parents. Under no circumstances will members of staff or volunteers be expected to, or allowed, to dress/undress a child 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.

5) Supervision of children

Children are supervised from 9.20a.m. until 3.00p.m. on all normal school days. During lunch breaks assigned teachers and an SNA (if applicable) will supervise on the yard. Any accidents (requiring attention within the school) will be recorded in the accident report book. Any strangers who enter the school during breaks will be asked to identify the purpose of their visit. Staff will not take children, on journeys, alone in their cars. Children will not be released to adults who are unknown to the teacher/school staff unless parents have informed the school in person, in writing or by telephone authorising the teacher about the new arrangement. (*See Supervision Policy*)

Where one parent informs the school that another parent is not allowed access to their children the school will require a copy of court orders which outline details of same. In the event of a parent not complying with a court order the Gardaí will be summoned to the school to enforce it.

6) One-to-one Teaching

When it has been deemed appropriate for individual students, one-to-one teaching may be provided. Every effort will be made to ensure the protection of the child and staff member. Vision panels are installed in all doors or the tuition room / classroom door may be left open where this type of teaching takes place. Parents will be notified if their child is to receive this type of support.

7) Visitors/guest speakers

Visitors and guest speakers will not be left alone with children. The school will check out the credentials of the visitor/guest speaker (through procedures already set out in this document (recruitment and selection of staff) and will ensure the content/material in use is appropriate. Visitors / Guests will be reminded of the procedures and relevant details of our schools policy. Children will continue to be under the supervision of the class teacher while a visitor is working with children e.g GAA coaching, in class presentations, Science workshops etc.

8) Special Educational Needs

Research has shown that children with special needs are more vulnerable and consequently more at risk of becoming victims of abuse for reasons such as:

- Poor communication skills;
- Limited sense of danger;
- Need for intimate care;
- Lack of mobility and greater reliance on adults;
- Need for attention, friendship or affection;
- Limited assertiveness and poorer self-confidence;
- Limited understanding of sexuality or sexual behaviour;
- Fear of not being believed.

In an effort to address the personal safety needs of children with special needs, the Stay Safe pack "*Personal Safety Skills for Children with Learning Difficulties*" is available to supplement the Stay Safe pack to assist teachers with this work. Support teachers will spend time with these children supporting the work of the class teacher. Special Needs Assistants, who are assigned to these children, have a vital role in supporting their safety and should therefore have access to training in child protection.

***** The Board of Management has ensured that the necessary policies, protocols or practices as appropriate are in place in respect of each of the above listed items.**

7. This policy together with the **Child Protection Procedures for Primary Schools 2011** has been made available to school personnel and the Parents' Association and will be readily accessible to parents on the school's website and in hard copy on request. A copy of this policy will be made available to the Department and the patron if requested.
8. This policy will be reviewed by the Board of Management at the beginning of every school year (**Appendix A**). Staff will be required to review the policy annually and read through and re-familiarise themselves with the **Child Protection Procedures for Primary Schools** at the beginning of each school year and refer to it as needed throughout the school year. The parents association will be informed that the annual review of the Child Protection Policy has taken place (**Appendix B**).

Implementation

This policy supersedes previous policies and is effective from November 2016.

Ratification & Communication

This policy was initially drafted in October 2006 and was fully reviewed and updated during 2012/2013 in line with most recent guidelines (2011)

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on the 6th of March 2013.

It will be available through our school website and/or administration office.

Review

This policy will be reviewed and amended as necessary by means of a whole school collaborative process.

Appendix A will be completed annually at the first BOM meeting of every school year.

Signed _____

Fr. Joseph McEvoy
Chairperson, Board of Management

Date _____

Signed _____

Denise Ward
Principal

Date _____



Scoil Mhuire Moynalty

Child Protection Review Checklist

Appendix A

Checklist for Annual Review of the Child Protection Policy

The Board of Management must undertake an annual review of its child protection policy and the following checklist shall be used for this purpose.

As part of the overall review process the staff and Board of Management of Scoil Mhuire Moynalty will assess other school policies & practices in order to gain as broad as possible an insight when reviewing the policy.

	Yes/No
Has the Board formally adopted a child protection policy in accordance with the 'Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools'?	
As part of the school's child protection policy, has the Board formally adopted, without modification, the 'Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools'?	
Are there both a DLP and a Deputy DLP currently appointed?	
Are the relevant contact details (HSE and An Garda Síochána) to hand?	
Has the DLP attended available child protection training?	
Has the Deputy DLP attended available child protection training?	
Have any members of the Board attended child protection training?	
Has the school's child protection policy identified other school policies, practices and activities that are regarded as having particular child protection relevance?	
Has the Board ensured that the Department's "Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools" are available to all school personnel?	
Has the Board arrangements in place to communicate the school's child protection policy to new school personnel?	
Is the Board satisfied that all school personnel have been made aware of their responsibilities under the 'Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools'?	
Since the Board's last annual review, was the Board informed of any child protection reports made to the HSE/An Garda Síochána by the DLP?	
Since the Board's last annual review, was the Board informed of any cases where the DLP sought advice from the HSE and as a result of this advice, no report to the HSE was made?	
Is the Board satisfied that the child protection procedures in relation to the making of reports to the HSE/ An Garda Síochána were appropriately followed?	
Were child protection matters reported to the Board appropriately recorded in the Board minutes?	

Is the Board satisfied that all records relating to child protection are appropriately filed and stored securely?	
Has the Board ensured that the Parents' Association (if any), has been provided with the school's child protection policy?	
Has the Board ensured that the school's child protection policy is available to parents on request?	
Has the Board ensured that the Stay Safe programme is implemented in full in the school?	
Has the Board ensured that the SPHE curriculum is implemented in full in the school? Is the Board satisfied that the Department's requirements for Garda Vetting have been met in respect of all school personnel (employees and volunteers)?	
Is the Board satisfied that the Department's requirements in relation to the provision of a child protection related statutory declaration and associated form of undertaking have been met in respect of persons appointed to teaching and non-teaching positions?	
Is the Board satisfied that, from a child protection perspective, thorough recruitment and selection procedures are applied by the school in relation to all school personnel (employees and volunteers)?	
Is the Board satisfied that the 'Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools' are being fully and adequately implemented by the school?	
Has the Board identified any aspects of the school's child protection policy and/or its implementation that require further improvement?	
Has the Board put in place an action plan containing appropriate timelines to address those aspects of the school's child protection policy and/or its implementation that have been identified as requiring further improvement ?	
Has the Board ensured that any areas for improvement that that were identified in any previous review of the school's child protection policy have been adequately addressed?	

Signed _____

Date _____

Fr. Joseph McEvoy
Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed _____

Date _____

Denise Ward
Principal



Scoil Mhuire Moynalty Child Protection Review

Appendix B

Notification to parents and staff regarding the Board of Management's annual review of the child protection policy

To: _____

The Board of Management of Scoil Mhuire Moynalty wishes to inform you that:

- The Board of Management's annual review of the school's child protection policy was completed at the Board meeting of _____
- This review was conducted in accordance with the checklist set out in Appendix 2 of the Department's 'Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools'

Signed _____

Date _____

Fr. Joseph McEvoy
Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed _____

Date _____

Denise Ward
Principal



Scoil Mhuire Moynalty

Child Protection

Dear Parents,

The Department of Education & Skills has recently published *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools*. Ensuring the protection and welfare of children is the responsibility of all of us who work with children and young people. Child protection must be a priority for every school and must be at the core of all of our activities. There is an obligation on schools to provide children with the highest possible standard of care in order to promote their well being and protect them from harm.

Because of the close contact school staff members have with children they are well placed to observe changes in children's behaviour, their lack of development or outward signs of abuse. In situations where any member of a school staff suspects that a child may be at risk of neglect or abuse, they must make sure that this is reported to the HSE and An Garda Síochána.

This reporting is done by the **Designated Liaison Person [DLP]**.

Every school must have 2 senior members of staff who fill the roles of Designated Liaison Person [DLP] and Deputy Designated Liaison Person [Deputy DLP].

In our school the **DLP is Denise Ward**

In our school the **Deputy DLP Rosemarie Ormiston**

Yours sincerely,

Denise Ward
Principal
DLP

Rosemarie Ormiston
Deputy Principal
DDLDP



Scoil Mhuire Moynalty

Child Protection Contacts

2016 - 2017

Designated Liaison Person (DLP)

Denise Ward

Deputy Designated Liaison Person (Deputy DLP)

Rosemarie Ormiston

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