



Child Protection Policy Scoil Chroí Ró Naofa Ballymurn

The school aims to provide its pupils with the highest standards of care and protection, in order to promote each child's well-being and safeguard him/her from harm while in the school. The Board of Management of Scoil Chroí Ró Naofa has adopted the "Children First" Guidelines of the Department of Health & Children 1999 and the "Child Protection" Procedures of the Department of Education & Science 2001.

It is incumbent on all staff to familiarise themselves with "Children First" and the DES child protection guidelines and procedures, copies are available from the Principal Teacher and on the 'shared drive' in the 'Child Protection' folder.

This document is a response to recent changes in legislation and takes account of the provisions of each of the following pieces of legislation:

- ✚ Freedom of Information Act 1997
- ✚ The Education Act 1998
- ✚ The Child Welfare Act 2000
- ✚ Children First – National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2011

The new procedures are based on the recently published **Children First – National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2011**. We formally adopt, without modification, the DES Child Protection Procedures (CPP) as per Circular 0065/2011.

References:

- ✚ "Children First" (Department of Health and Children 1999)
- ✚ "Our Children Our Church" (CORI 2005)
- ✚ "Child Protection Guidelines and Procedures" (Department of Education and Science 2001)
- ✚ Policy Sources accessed through Internet

The Board of Management 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. Accordingly, 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 Chroí Ró Naofa has agreed the following child protection policy:

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.

The Designated Liaison Person (DLP) is **Maria Brophy**. The Deputy Designated Liaison Person (Deputy DLP) is **Niamh Lawlor**.

In its policies, practices and activities, Scoil Chroí Ró Naofa will adhere to the following principles of best practice in child protection and welfare:

- **PREVENTION – Curricular provision**
- **PROCEDURES – Procedures for dealing with concerns / disclosures**
- **PRACTICE – best practice in child protection**

AIMS:

This policy aims to:

- ✚ Create a safe, trusting, responsive and caring environment
- ✚ Provide a personal safety skills education which specifically addresses abuse prevention (physical, emotional, sexual and neglect)
- ✚ 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/or disclosures of child abuse
- ✚ Provide for ongoing training in this and related areas for all school staff

The school shall -

- ✚ 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
- ✚ fully respect confidentiality requirements in dealing with child protection matters and
- ✚ the school will also adhere to the above principles in relation to any adult pupil with a special vulnerability.

Certain policies such as Scoil Chroí Ró Naofa's Code of Behaviour/Anti-bullying Policy, Pupil Attendance Policy and the Supervision of Pupils Policy will take particular account of this Child Protection Policy. This policy will also be considered with reference to the participation by pupils in sporting activities, other extra-curricular activities and school outings. Other practices and activities, where child protection might have particular relevance, will take due consideration of the procedures outlined within this policy.

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

This policy has been made available to school personnel and the Parents' Association and is readily accessible to parents on request. A copy of this policy will be made available to the Department and the patron if requested.

Designated Liaison Person (DLP)

In Scoil Chroí Ró Naofa, Maria Brophy is the DLP. Niamh Lawlor acts as Deputy DLP. Both teachers have and shall continue to undertake training from the Child Abuse Prevention Programme. **CAPP** provides training to the whole school community (staff, parents and Boards of Management) on the stay Safe Programme.

The DLP has specific responsibility for child protection and will represent the school in all correspondence 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.

Further information on the responsibilities of the DLP can be referred to on pg. 8 section 2.2 of "Child Protection" (DES 2001). The DLP acts in cases where there are reasonable grounds for suspicion or where an allegation has been made, as referred to in "Child Protection (DES 2001, 11-12).

PROCEDURES

All staff (Teachers, SNAs, ancillary, secretarial, caretaking etc.) in this school will follow the recommendations for reporting concerns or disclosures as outlined in "Children First" and DES document "Child Protection, Guidelines and Procedures"

Confidentiality

All information regarding concerns of possible child abuse should only be shared on a "need to know" basis in the interests of the child. The giving of information to those who need to have that information is not a breach of confidentiality. This procedure exists for the protection of a child who may have been or has been abused. 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.

In emergency situations, where the Health Board cannot be contacted, and the child appears to be at immediate and serious risk, An Garda Síochána should be contacted immediately. A child should not be left in a dangerous situation pending Health Board intervention.

Protection for Persons Reporting Child Abuse

The protection for persons reporting Child Abuse Act 1998 provides immunity from civil liability to any person who reports child abuse "reasonably and in good faith" to designated officers of Health Boards or any member of an Garda Síochána, see "Child Protection" (DES 2001, pg.6).

Qualified Privilege

People making a report to the DLP in good faith have "qualified privilege" under common law, see "Child Protection Guidelines and Procedures" (DES 2001, pg. 6).

Reports made to Health Boards may be subject to provisions of the Freedom of Information Act, 1997. This act enables members of the public to obtain access to personal information relating to them which is in the possession of public bodies. However, the act also provides that public bodies may refuse access to information obtained by them in confidence.





Roles and Responsibilities - Board of Management:

- It is the role of the BoM to ensure that a Child Protection Policy is planned and implemented in Scoil Chroí Ró Naofa
- The BoM will appoint a DLP and a DDLP.
- The BoM will ensure that appropriate and on-going training as necessary will be available for the DLP and DDLP.
- The BoM will ensure that curricular provision is in place for the prevention of child abuse.
- The BoM will ensure that relevant on-going training be made available to all teaching staff e.g. Stay Safe Programme training.
- The BoM will allow for teacher attendance at necessary child protection / case conferences during school hours.
- The BoM fully endorses the vetting of teaching and non-teaching staff as outlined in DES Circular 094/2006, (see attached circular).

- The BoM will ensure that Child Protection and Health and Safety matters are listed as items on each BoM meeting agenda.
- The BoM will ensure that all staff members, full-time and temporary are made aware of the Child Protection guidelines for school personnel specific to Scoil Chroí Ró Naofa.
- The BoM will make copies of the 2001 DES Child Protection Guidelines and Procedures available to all staff members in the common area of the staff room.
- The BoM recognises that it has a duty of care to both the pupils and employees of Scoil Chroí Ró Naofa.
- As employers, the BoM will seek legal advice if an allegation of abuse against a school employee is made.
- In such a case the chairperson of the BoM will have responsibility for addressing the employment issues surrounding such an allegation.
- While it is normally the responsibility of the DLP to report any matters to the HSE, if an allegation of abuse is made against the DLP then it is the responsibility of the chairperson of the BoM to report the matter.
- The BoM will undertake to make copies of the Child Protection Policy available in the school office and on the school website.

Definition and Recognition of Child Abuse

Child abuse can be categorised into four different types:

-  Neglect
-  Emotional abuse
-  Physical abuse
-  Sexual abuse

Each of these categories is defined in full in "Children First" (Dept. Health and Children 1999, pgs. 31-33) but for the purpose of this policy attention is drawn to the stated definition of "neglect".

Neglect can be defined in terms of an *omission*, where the child suffers significant harm or impairment of development by being deprived of food, clothing, warmth, hygiene, intellectual stimulation, supervision and safety, attachment to and affection from adults, medical care.

Guidelines for Recognition of Child Abuse

A list of child abuse indicators is contained in Appendix 1 "Children First" (DHC 1999, pgs. 31-33). This policy draws particular attention to "persistent evidence" of neglect, including indicators such as no lunch, lack of uniform, no homework, poor attendance, persistent health problems, lack of sleep indicating inappropriate television viewing late at night and other evidence that would indicate lack of supervision in the home. All signs and symptoms must be examined in the total context of the child's situation and family circumstances.

There are commonly three stages in the identification of child abuse:

1. Considering the possibility
2. Looking out for signs of abuse
3. Recording of information

Each of these stages is developed in "Children First" (DHC 1999, pgs. 34-35).

Suspicious of Abuse

- ✚ Staff members who suspect abuse should refer to Children First National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children, 1999, especially
- ✚ Chapter 3 : Definition & Recognition of Child Abuse
- ✚ Chapter 4: Basis for Reporting and Standard Reporting Procedures
- ✚ Appendix 1: Signs and Symptoms Of Child Abuse
- ✚ Staff members should observe and record over time the dates, signs, symptoms, behaviour causing them concern.
- ✚ They should inform the DLP and pass on all records.

Handling Disclosures from Children

“Child Protection” (DES 2001, pg. 9) gives comprehensive details of how disclosures should be approached. Staffs are advised to deal with each situation sensitively, reassure the child but not to make promises that cannot be fulfilled.

The adult should not ask leading questions or make suggestions. They should explain that further help may have to be sought. The discussion should then be recorded accurately.

The record should include reference to what was observed with sketches of physical injury where necessary. It should also record when the alleged incident took place. Records should be kept in a secure place. The information should then be conveyed to the school DLP.

If the reporting person and the DLP are satisfied that there are reasonable grounds for the suspicion/allegation, the procedures outlined in “Children First” (DHC, pg. 38) will be adhered to. Standardised reporting forms should be used (Appendix 1). The content of the report should follow the guidelines on pg. 39 of “Children First”.

The staff and management of this school have agreed:

- 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.

When information is offered in confidence the member of staff will need to act with sensitivity in responding to the disclosure. The member of staff will need to reassure the child, and retain his/her trust, while explaining the need for action and the possible consequences, which will necessarily involve other adults being informed. It is important to tell the child that everything possible will be done to protect and support him/her but not to make promises that cannot be kept e.g. promising not to tell anyone else. The welfare of the child is regarded as the first and paramount consideration. In so far as is practicable, due consideration will be given, having regard to age and understanding, the wishes of the child.

The following advice is offered to school personnel to whom a child makes a disclosure of abuse.

- Remain calm.
- Listen to the child with sensitivity and openness.
- Take all disclosures seriously
- Do not ask leading questions or make suggestions to the child
- Offer reassurance but do not make promises.
- Do not stop a child recalling significant events

- Do not over react
- Explain that further help may have to be sought
- Record the discussion accurately and retain the record of dates, times, names, locations, context and factual details of conversation.

The Chairperson of the Board of Management will be informed before the DLP makes contact with the relevant authorities unless the situation demands that more immediate action to be taken for the safety of the child in which case the Chairman may be informed after the report has been submitted.

Any Professional who suspects child abuse should inform parents/carers if a report is to be submitted to the Health Board or An Garda Síochána unless doing so is likely to endanger the child.

In cases of emergency, where a child appears to be at immediate and serious risk, and a duty social worker is unavailable, an Garda Síochána should be contacted. Under no circumstances should a child be left in a dangerous situation pending Health Board intervention.

Child Protection Meetings/Case Conferences

- ✚ A request is made from the HSE through the DLP who should consult with the Chairperson of the B.O.M. of the school. The Chairperson may seek clarification through the DLP as to why the attendance of the school employee is necessary and ascertain who else will be present.
- ✚ The school employee may complete a report for the meeting/conference. (See Appendix 3, Child Protection Guidelines and Procedures, DES).
- ✚ The school employee will be advised if children/parents/guardians are going to be present. The school employee may contact the Chairperson of the Child Protection Meeting for advice.
- ✚ The school employee may keep a child's behaviour under closer observation, if requested to do so. This may include observing the child's behaviour, peer interactions, school progress or informal conversations.
- ✚ In all cases, individuals who refer or discuss their concerns about the care and protection of children with HSE staff, should be informed of the likely steps to be taken by the professionals involved. Where appropriate and within the normal limits of confidentiality, reporting staff will be kept informed about the outcomes of any enquiry or investigation following on from their report
- ✚ Teachers attending a child protection meeting/case conference should familiarise themselves with the protocol outlined on pgs. 149 - 155 of Children First Guidelines, 1999; pgs. 13-14 Child Protection Guidelines and Procedures, DES.

Allegations or Suspicions in relation to School Employees

Procedures for BOM in cases of allegations or suspicions of child abuse by a school employee:

A. Reporting

In the event of receiving a complaint or suspicion re an employee:

- ✚ The DLP will immediately inform the chairperson.
- ✚ S/He will seek a written statement of the allegation from the person/agency making the allegation. Parents/Guardians may make a statement on behalf of a child.

- ✚ The DLP will seek advice from the relevant HSE and will take responsibility for reporting, based on this advice.
- ✚ If the DLP, following consultation with the HSE, decides that this matter is not for reporting, s/he must inform the Chairperson. They must then inform, in writing, the person or agency making the allegation, of the reasons for this decision. If this person or agency still has concerns, they are free to consult with or report to the relevant HSE or Gardaí on an individual basis. The provisions of the Protection for Persons reporting Child Abuse Act 1998 apply, once they report reasonably and in good faith.
- ✚ If the DLP, following consultation with the HSE, decides that this matter is for reporting s/he should inform the Chairperson, who should proceed in accordance with the procedures in the Child Protection Guidelines and Procedures, DES, 2001.
- ✚ The DLP/Deputy DLP completes a standard reporting form as comprehensively as is possible.
- ✚ When the Chairperson becomes aware of an allegation of abuse s/he will always seek legal advice and base his/her response on this advice.
- ✚ S/he will privately inform the employee of the fact and nature of the allegation and whether or not it has been reported by the DLP to the HSE. (Refer to 4.2 - 4.3, p.16 of Child Protection Guidelines and Procedures, DES, 2001. The chairperson has a duty to afford the employee fairness and due process - s/he is entitled to details and a copy of the written allegation, to advice and representation and an opportunity to respond to the Board within a week.

B. Responding

- ✚ When the Chairperson becomes aware of an allegation of abuse s/he will always seek legal advice and base his/her response on this advice.
- ✚ The Chairperson will consider whether there is any risk to pupils' safety. If the Chairperson considers that there is a risk - s/he may require the employee to take immediate administrative leave. If unsure the chairperson will consult with the HSE/Gardaí.
- ✚ If administrative leave has been invoked, the chairperson will inform the DES. The HSE (in some cases the Gardaí) may also be notified in accordance with legal advice received.
- ✚ Once it is deemed necessary by the DLP and Chairperson to make a report (after receiving advice from the HSE) the Chairperson will convene and inform a meeting of the BOM as soon as possible.
- ✚ Where the alleged abuse has taken place within the school, or relates to the abuse of pupils of the school, by school employees outside of school time, the BOM will investigate the matter. They will convene a further meeting, once the relevant information has been gathered. At this meeting the BOM will consider in detail:
 - the allegations made and their source
 - the advice given by relevant authorities
 - the written responses of the employee.

At this meeting also

- ✚ the person/agency who is alleging abuse by the school employee should be offered an opportunity to present his/her case to the BOM and may be accompanied by another person
- ✚ Parents/guardians may act on behalf of child

- ✚ The employee should also be afforded an opportunity to present his/her case and may also be accompanied.
- ✚ The BOM must deal with the matter sensitively and the employee must be fairly treated.
- ✚ The BOM will make a decision on action, if any, based on their investigation and will inform the employee of this in writing. They will also inform the DES of the outcome, if the employee has been absent on administrative leave.
- ✚ Where it is not possible for the BOM to conduct an enquiry into allegations (e.g. where abuse has occurred in past employment, or where the employee is undergoing investigation by relevant authorities), the Chairperson will act on advice of authorities.
- ✚ The Chairperson will maintain close contact with the HSE and receive reports and records from them where appropriate.

The Chairperson and the DLP are primarily concerned with the protection of the children in their care. However, **employees must be protected against false and malicious claims. Legal Advice** should be sought by the board in relation to the employee.

There are two procedures to be followed:

- i. The reporting procedure
- ii. The procedure for dealing with the Employee.

The DLP has responsibility for reporting the matter to the Health Board. The Chairperson, Board of Management has responsibility, acting in consultation with the Board, for addressing the employment issues. If the allegation is against the DLP, the Chairperson of the Board of Management will assume the responsibility for reporting the matter to the Health Board.

If the allegation is against the DLP, the BoM Chairperson will assume the responsibility for reporting the matter to the Health Board.

Administrative Leave

Should the Board of Management direct that the employee absent him/herself as above, such absence of the employee would be regarded as administrative leave of absence with pay and not suspension and would not imply any degree of guilt. The DES should be immediately informed.

Board of Management

The Chairperson should inform the Board of Management of all the details and remind the members of their serious responsibility to maintain strict confidentiality on all matters relating to the issue and the principles of due process and natural justice.

School Measures Taken to Protect the Children in Our Care

There are a number of areas where common sense in our school should prevail in order to protect the children in the school and the staff who care for them. In relation to this, certain points should be noted:

- ✚ Scoil Chroí Ró Naofa will fully implement the Stay Safe programme.
- ✚ A copy of the school's child protection policy, which includes the names of the Designated Liaison Person (DLP) and Deputy DLP, will be made available to all school personnel and the Parents' Association and is readily accessible to parents on request.
- ✚ The name of the DLP and other relevant support services are displayed in a prominent position near the main entrance to the school.
- ✚ 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.

- ✚ Scoil Chroí Ró Naofa will undertake an annual review of its child protection policy and its implementation by the school. A checklist, to be used in undertaking the review, is included at **Appendix 1**. The school has put in place an action plan to address any areas for improvement which might be identified by the annual review. The Board of Management shall 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.
- ✚ Staff who take classes swimming should make sure that there are two adults in attendance at all times. The dressing rooms and pool area should be well supervised.
- ✚ Staff should not be alone in a classroom with one child or detain a child on their own after school. In the case of special needs pupils where resource hours and assistance are sanctioned on an individual basis it is school policy that staff in such a situation should work with the classroom door open, thus rendering the occupants visible at all times (see Intimate Care Policy).
- ✚ When possible children should work in groups
- ✚ Children with physical disabilities who may require assistance in toiletry matters will be aided by a Special Needs Assistant who has met the necessary screening requirements when being employed by the school.

It should be noted that children with disabilities may be more at risk of abuse due to a number of reasons (see list outlined on pg. 99 of "Children First Guidelines").

Parents, teachers and all staff involved in services for children with disabilities need to be familiar with the indicators of abuse and to be alert for signs of abuse.

PREVENTION

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

On enrolment of their child, parents will be informed that the Stay Safe programme is in use in the school and parents will sign consent for their child to participate throughout the school. A copy of the "Stay Safe: A parent's guide" will be available to parents.

The formal lessons of the programme will be taught in Senior Infants, 2nd, 4th and 6th classes

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

First Aid

When administering First Aid teachers/ancillary staff must always have at least 2 pupils present. In the event of a child getting sick the same procedures as for toileting accidents will be observed.

Changing for Concerts/Swimming Activities

- ✚ Where assistance is needed in dressing and undressing this will be done in communal areas and with written consent of parents. Under no circumstance will members of staff / volunteers be expected to dress/undress a child in a private area. At all times there will be adequate supervision of pupils.
- ✚ Swimming – two female and two male supervisors are to be with the children at all times when they are changing for swimming. The supervisors **must** not be alone with the children at any time. All children to remain in changing room with both supervisors until everyone is ready to leave and board the bus.
- ✚ Parents will not be allowed back to classrooms to collect children until all the children are dressed.
- ✚ Taking photographs in classroom while children are getting dresses/undressed is strictly prohibited.
- ✚ 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 Principal and parents.

Inappropriate Physical Contact by pupils

Children in the school setting can at all times be overly emotionally attached to their teacher especially where small group or one to one teaching is taking place. This attachment can manifest itself sometimes in wanting to show affection to their teacher which can appear inappropriate to an onlooker. Such behaviour is also not in the best interest of pupil or teacher. The pupil becomes clingy and dependent and the teacher leaves him/herself open to allegations of misconduct. Should a teacher have any concerns, a meeting will be arranged with the pupil's parents and the matter discussed. A written copy of what been agreed will be made and kept in the child's file. This is for the protection of all parties.

Curriculum Implications

In Scoil Chroí Ró Naofa 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 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 health-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

In Scoil Chroí Ró Naofa we work to ensure that our school is physically and emotionally safe. The Stay Safe Programme is the primary resource used to provide education for children on abuse prevention. The programme is taught as part of school's S.P.H.E. curriculum under the strand "Safety and Protection". The formal lessons of the programme will be taught in their entirety every year in accordance with S.P.H.E plan.

Our S.P.H.E. programme promotes the protective skills of self-esteem and assertiveness. Circle time methodology is used on a whole class basis. Our anti-bullying policy is implemented in all classes. Co-operative and interpersonal skills are developed through working in pairs and groups.

On enrolment of their child, parents will be informed that the Stay Safe programme is in use in the school and a copy of the Stay Safe "A Parent's guide" will be available. Staff will make every effort to ensure that the message of the programme are re-enforced whenever possible.

Success Criteria

We will evaluate the success of this policy using the following criteria:

- Delivery and participation by all staff in training
- Delivery of the SPHE curriculum
- Resources to support the delivery of SPHE
- Delivery and participation by children in the Stay Safe Programme which shall be taught each February/March
- Assessment of these procedures by participants following a child protection case
- Feedback from all staff

Timeframe for Review

At the first staff meeting of every year the DLP will remind all teachers of the guidelines and copies of Chapter 3 & 4 & Appendix 1 of The Children First Guidelines and Child Protection Guidelines and Procedures, DES will be given to those who require them.

A review will be conducted based on the criteria above, following any and all incidents when the guidelines are used.

Responsibility for Review

DLP, Principal, all Staff

Ratification of Policy

This policy will be reviewed by the Board of Management once in every school year.

This policy was reviewed by the Board of Management on 4th October, 2017.

Matthew Kelly

Signed:

Matthew Kelly
Chairperson of Board of Management

Maria Brophy

Signed: _____

Maria Brophy
Principal

Date: 4th October, 2017

Date: 4th October, 2017

The Board further endorses Principal, Maria Brophy as DLP and Niamh Lawlor as Deputy DLP.

On behalf of the Board of Management:

Matthew Kelly

Matthew Kelly (Chairperson): *Matthew Kelly*

Date: 4th October, 2017

Appendix 1: 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.

The checklist is designed as an aid to conducting this review and is not intended as an exhaustive list. The Board of Management may wish to include other items in the checklist that are of particular relevance to Scoil Chroí Ró Naofa and reserves the right to do so if/when the need occurs.

Appendix 2:

Please refer to the 'Stay Safe Best Practice Guide' which can be found on the school 'shared drive' system alongside this policy.

Appendix 3

Child Protection Practices

Appendix 4

Staff – Signing sheet to confirm their reading of this policy.

APPENDIX 1

Annual Checklist for Board of Management

As part of the overall review process, Boards of Management should also assess other school policies, practices and activities vis a vis their adherence to the principles of best practice in child protection and welfare as set out in the school's Child Protection 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'?	Yes/No
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'?	Yes/No
Are there both a DLP and a Deputy DLP currently appointed?	Yes/No
Are the relevant contact details (HSE and An Garda Síochána) to hand?	Yes/No
Has the DLP attended available child protection training?	Yes/No
Has the Deputy DLP attended available child protection training?	Yes/No
Have any members of the Board attended child protection training?	Yes/No
Has the school's child protection policy identified other school policies, practices and activities that are regarded as having particular child protection relevance?	Yes/No
Has the Board ensured that the Department's "Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools" are available to all school personnel?	Yes/No

Does the Board have arrangements in place to communicate the school's child protection policy to new school personnel?	Yes/No
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'?	Yes/No
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?	Yes/No
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?	Yes/No
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?	Yes/No
Were child protection matters reported to the Board appropriately recorded in the Board minutes?	Yes/No
Is the Board satisfied that all records relating to child protection are appropriately filed and stored securely?	Yes/No
Has the Board ensured that the Parents' Association has been provided with the school's child protection policy?	Yes/No

APPENDIX 3

CHILD PROTECTION PRACTICES:

The staff and board of management of this school have agreed that the following practices be adopted:

1. **Recruitment and selection of staff:** All applicants will be asked to supply in writing information which includes:
 - + Appropriate personal details
 - + Details of past and current work / volunteering experience, indicating relevant qualifications or skills acquired
 - + At least two written references –verification of references should be sought through making verbal contact with the referees
 - + Garda vetting will be sought
2. **General Conduct:** 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)
 - + 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 or the use of sexually explicit or pornographic material.
3. **Toileting/Intimate care:**
 - a. **Children with specific toileting/intimate care needs:**

Normally a child who has specific toileting needs will have a special needs assistant assigned to him/her. It is very important that, before the child is enrolled in the school, a meeting is held at which all school personnel involved with the child attend along with the child's parents/guardians. At that meeting the needs of the child will be addressed and agreement reached as to how the school can meet those needs. Those involved with the intimate care of the child will agree practices which are acceptable to the staff, the child and the parents. Practices agreed will 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 practices agreed.
 - b. **Toileting 'Accidents'**

Toileting accidents are not uncommon, particularly at junior level. Parents may not be in a position to come to the school immediately should their child have a toileting accident. If a child wets him/herself they are asked if they feel able to change their clothes unassisted, if they are happy to do so, they are taken to the toilet area beside the Principal's classroom and they go into the toilet cubicle and close over the door, the staff member (usually the School Secretary or SNA) would wait in the outer area for the child to finish, after washing hands etc the wet clothes are put into a plastic bag and put into the child's school bag to be taken home. If the child is not able to undress him/herself and an older brother/sister is in the school we would ask him/her to assist. If there are no older siblings, then two members

of staff would assist the child. If the child soils him/herself the parent/guardian would be contacted immediately, if the parent cannot come to the school we would ask them to arrange for someone to come in their place, in the unlikely event that nobody can come to the school we would ask permission from the Parents that two members of staff would assist the child in cleaning and changing their clothes. A note should be kept of such incidents and parents should be informed.

4. Supervision of Children – Break Time and Lunch

Junior Infants – 2nd Class children play in the small yard– 1 teacher and 1 SNA

3rd Class – 6th Class children play on the back yard - 1 teacher

Wet days – 2 teachers and 1 SNA

Wet days – 5th/6th Class to be split amongst remaining four mainstream classrooms

If our school is aware of a court order being in place which prevents someone from having access to a child, a copy of that order should be requested by the school. In the event of the parent/guardian's non compliance with the court order the Gardaí should be summoned to the school to enforce it.

Children will always be driven with two staff members present, or where many children are being driven, 1 adult can drive. Junior and Senior Infants will be collected by parents at the school gate with the child's name being called and parent identified by SNA / class teacher.

5. One-to-one teaching

If it is deemed appropriate for an individual child, then one-to-one teaching or SNA support may be provided, in a separate room which has been fitted with a vision panel.

6. Visitor/Guest speakers

Visitors/guest speakers should not be left alone with children. The school (BOM/principal/teacher as appropriate) has a responsibility to check out the credentials of the visitor/guest speaker and to ensure that the content/material in use is appropriate. The guest speaker will always work within the parameters of the curriculum, and must be familiar with same. All visitors must sign the 'visitor book' in the office and introduce themselves to the secretary.

7. Internet Safety (see also acceptable use policy) –

Children are only allowed access to the internet under supervision of a teacher or SNA.

Child protection concerns are addressed in the school's Acceptable Use Policy as part of its information and Communication Technology Policy. These policies deal with issues relating to use of the internet at school, such as access or use of children's photos or names on the school web-site.

- Mobile/camera phones. handheld game devices, MP3 players etc., are not permitted to be used by children during school hours and will be kept in the office if found in possession of a child. A child may need to use a mobile phone to contact family after school but the phone must be kept in the child's bag, switched off during school hours.

It should be recognised that none of the above technologies are inherently bad, many have significant potential benefits for the child and a simplistic ban is rarely the best policy. Up-to-date information will be readily available from various websites including www.webwise.ie.

APPENDIX 4

Please sign below to confirm you have read and understood the Child Protection Policy at Scoil Chroí Ró Naofa:

NAME	SIGNATURE	DATE
Maria Brophy		
Niamh Lawlor		
Nicola Sheehan		
Sarah Pitt		
Claire Atkinson		
Eileen Redmond		
Brian Murphy		
Carmel Flynn		
Charlie Gordon		
Leanna Redmond		
Monica Nurney		
Aileen Byrne		