

Child Protection Policy – Carriglea National School

Introductory Statement

The staff, parents and management of **Carriglea National School** have developed and 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

The Board of Management recognises that child protection and welfare considerations permeate all aspects of school life and must be reflected in each school policy, school 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 BOM of Carriglea NS has approved this Child Protection Policy.

The BOM has adopted and will fully implement without modification the Department of Education and Skills Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools 2011. These procedures will therefore underpin the content of this policy.

The following key personnel have been identified and ratified by the BOM:

The Designated Liaison Person (DLP) is Jillian Hayes.

The Deputy Designated Liaison Person (Deputy DLP) is Gillian Collins.

An individual copy of this policy document and the appended section from the Department of Education and Science Child Protection Guidelines and Procedures will be made available to all staff.

It is incumbent on all staff to familiarize themselves with 'Children First' and the DES child protection guidelines and procedures which is available in the office in the child protection file.

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.
- Provide for ongoing training in this and related areas for all school staff

Prevention

Stay Safe

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 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' provided.

The formal lessons of the programme will be taught in their entirety every second year in accordance with the SPHE two-year cycle plan. All staff sign a log on completion of the assigned lessons for their class level. Special arrangements will be made to deliver the programme to individuals who may be vulnerable. All topics must be taught. Bullying will be supplemented with activities from www.webwise.ie to cover internet and social network bullying. Guest speakers on internet safety will be invited every 2-3 years to speak to pupils. The PA organise guest speakers on internet safety and social media safety on a regular basis.

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

At Carriglea N.S we have a multi class situation and every effort will be made to cover the core objectives at each level.

The learning support teacher and Special Needs Assistants will reinforce any lessons taught in class, when the class teacher feels the pupil has not understood the objectives of the lesson. Extra lessons are available on www.staysafe.ie for children with special needs

New parents will be informed that Stay Safe is taught in the school and the information booklet will be distributed before the new school year begins.

RSE

RSE will be taught at all levels. A member of school staff must remain in the room with visiting RSE speakers. If a parent wishes for their child to opt out of RSE parents must provide a written statement stating that they are taking responsibility for delivering this content to their child.

Freedom of Information Act

Schools do not fall under this act and parents/press do not have the right to access school records etc. However, anything that is sent from a school to the HSE immediately becomes available under this act.

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 the Department of Education and Science document, 'Child Protection, Guidelines and Procedures'.

The Board of Management of this school has appointed Jillian Hayes as the Designated Liaison Person (DLP) and Gillian Collins as the deputy DLP.

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. However you cannot guarantee any one confidentially if they report/disclose information to you.
- Record everything (facts only, not opinion)
- If contacting the HSE for advice speak to the Duty Care Social Worker, the name of the child or family does not have to be given when seeking advice. After advice has been received on the phone from the HSE, this will be followed immediately by a letter/email from the school to the HSE confirming this advice. All referrals will be made using the report template attached.
- If the HSE advice not to report the incident, the staff member who brought the information to the DLP will be informed.
- If there are further concerns about a child, the child will be monitored and records kept.
- All dealings with HSE will be reported to B.O.M.

Decision to Report to HSE

- D.L.P informs B.O.M.
- D.L.P. informs the parents/guardians if you are not putting the child at further risk D.D.L.P. will also be present for this meeting.
- If the decision is made not to inform the parents, contact HSE for guidance and record reasons for this decision.

B.O.M. Meetings

Circular 65/11 requires that the Board be informed at every meeting, the situation in the school re referrals, this will be done as part of the Principals Report.

- The number of referrals made to the HSE
- The number of advice sought from the HSE
- If no cases of the above occurred.

If a referral has been made no details about the referral or the incident should be discussed at the board.

Transfer of Children with Referrals to Another School

If a child who has been the subject of a HSE referral moves school(including transfer to secondary school)the HSE must be notified. This report should not be sent to the new school, the D.L.P. may inform the new principal of their concerns however no documents will be passed on.

Contact with the HSE

- If a social worker you do not know contacts the school, take their number and ring them back.
- If you make a referral, you are entitled to a status update from the HSE and can ring them.

Red Card System

Each teacher has a red card in their classroom attached to their whiteboard. If an emergency occurs in your classroom, a pupil will be sent to the nearest adult with this red card signifying immediate help is needed.

Collection from school

Parents are asked to inform the school if someone other than a parent or grandparent is collecting their child.

Action/Complaint against a staff member(Child protection)

This includes all staff/personnel involved in the school including unpaid volunteers. The B.O.M. informs the employee and conducts an investigation. The employee may be put on administrative leave following an investigation.

Practice:

The following areas have been considered by the staff and board of management of this school 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) Physical contact

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
- 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.

b) Visitors / Guest Speakers:

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

c) Children with specific toileting/intimate care needs:

In all situations where a pupil needs assistance with toileting /intimate care a meeting will be convened, after enrolment and before the child starts school, between parents/guardians, class teacher, special needs assistant, principal and if appropriate the pupil . The purpose of the meeting will be to ascertain the specific needs of the child and to determine how the school can best meet those needs. The staff to be involved in this care will be identified and provision will be made for occasions when the particular staff involved are absent. A written copy of what has been agreed will be made and kept in the child's file.

Two members of staff will be present when dealing with intimate care/toileting needs if deemed necessary. Any deviation from the agreed procedure will be recorded and notified to the DLP and the parents/guardians.

d) Toileting accidents:

A supply of clean underwear and suitable clothing 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 and the parents/guardians cannot be contacted the child will be assisted by members of staff familiar to the child as outlined in school enrolment form. In all such situations two members of staff should be present.

A record of all such incidents will be kept and principal and parents will be notified.

e) One- to One teaching

It is the policy in this school 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. Parents of children who are to be involved in one-to-one teaching will be informed and their agreement sought.

Work being carried out by special needs assistants will be carried out under the direction of the class teacher in an open environment.

f) Changing for Games/ PE/ Swimming / Drama

Pupils will be expected to dress and undress themselves for games/PE/ swimming /Drama. 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/ 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.

In relation to swimming lessons as part of P.E.curriculum a female/male member of staff will supervise the girls/boys changing rooms if available. However, if a female/ male is on staff that day we will rely on a female/ male member of the sporting facility to supervise in girls /boys changing room. All people who are involved in activities with the pupils of our school will be garda vetted.

Parents consent is sought on our school enrolment form for use of internet for educational purposes.

Parents consent is also sought to use pupils photographs on school website, school twitter and local press.

g) Zoom

In the event of forced school closures due to a lockdown teacher may engage in teaching via zoom. All parents will be asked to read and sign our zoom guidelines and agreement prior to engaging in any zoom activities. Security will be controlled by the teacher in charge of the zoom class. Anyone not abiding by the guidelines will be removed for the lesson. Parents may be contacted.

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.

Links to other policy / planning areas:

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

Procedures: Anti-Bullying Policy .
Health and Safety Statement.
Acceptable Use Policy.

Practice P.E. Policy
School Tours / Excursion Policy

Review and Monitoring

This policy will be monitored and reviewed by the Board of Management on an annual basis at the first meeting of the year or when the need arises. The board of management will ensure that adequate training and support is provided for all staff. Written notification of the review will be given to the P.A.

This Policy was reviewed and ratified by the BOM on Oct 2023

Chairperson:

Date: