



ST. JOSEPH'S BOYS' NATIONAL SCHOOL TERENURE

SCHOOL POLICY FOR DEALING WITH ALLEGATIONS OR SUSPICIONS OF CHILD ABUSE AND ITS PREVENTION AND TREATMENT.

INTRODUCTION

It is the policy of Saint Joseph's School to set standards for the welfare of all the children in its care, with a view to protecting them from neglect, physical, sexual and emotional harm.

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 St Joseph's BNS 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 Mr. Declan Donnelly
3. The Deputy Designated Liaison Person (Deputy DLP) is Ms. Anne McCabe.
4. In its policies, practices and activities, St. Joseph's BNS 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.

The school will also adhere to the above principles in relation to any adult pupil with a special vulnerability.

5. St. Joseph's BNS child protection policy's aims, procedures and practices are as follows:

- To recognise that the protection and welfare of children is of paramount importance, regardless of all other considerations. The *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools*, chapter 2 list the categories of child abuse, signs and symptoms of child abuse and children with additional vulnerabilities and in chapter 3 lists recognition of possible signs of abuse, dealing with disclosures and record keeping. St. Joseph's BNS will follow these procedures and be fully cognisant of its role in the protection and welfare of children.
- To establish and identify the Designated Liaison Person (DLP) appointed in the school for dealing with outside agencies and to establish and identify the Deputy Designated Liaison Person (Deputy DLP). Declan Donnelly (DLP) and Anne Mc Cabe (Deputy DLP) will fully adhere to the list of responsibilities and duties assigned to the DLP and DDLP which can be found in chapter 3 of the *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools*.
- To fully co-operate with the relevant statutory authorities in relation to child protection and welfare matters as listed in the *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools*, and in the publication *Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children*, Department of Children and Youth Affairs
 - A copy of the St, Joseph BNS child protection policy which includes the names of the DLP and Deputy DLP is available to all school personnel and the Parents' Association and is readily accessible to parents on request.
 - The name of the DLP is 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.

- St. Joseph's BNS has implemented and co-operates fully on all such matters as listed below: requirements for Garda vetting and recruitment procedures, staff training, confidentiality, protection for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act, 1998, qualified privilege, Freedom of Information Acts, 1997 and 2003 and the Data Protection Acts, 1988 and 2003.
- To adopt the safe practices and procedures listed in *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools* and in *Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children*, in order 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 or neglect. Guidelines and practices on the following have been devised and are practiced by all staff: physical contact with pupils, private confidential interviews with pupils, children going to the toilet, children using swimming or public facilities and physical education and games
- To establish clear procedures which teachers and other school staff must follow when they suspect or are alerted to possible child abuse including where a child discloses abuse. If school personnel have concerns that children with whom they have contact may have been abused or neglected, or are being abused or neglected, or are at risk of abuse or neglect, the matter shall be reported without delay to HSE Children and Family Social Services. The reporting procedures outlined in chapter 4 of the *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools* shall be followed without amendment by St. Joseph's BNS.
- To outline the responsibilities attaching to various members of the school authority in dealing with allegations or suspicions of child abuse. The *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools* lists the action to be taken by school personnel such as the DLP, Principal's report to the Board of Management and when seeking advice and feedback from the HSE. St. Joseph's BNS accepts these responsibilities and will adhere to them fully.
- To outline procedures for monitoring the progress of children considered to be at risk. The *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools* chapter 3 clearly outlines the needs for accurate record keeping which should then be given to the DLP.
- To contribute to the prevention of child abuse through curricular provision. As listed in the *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools*, St. Joseph's BNS implements and fully endorses the curricular provision and child abuse prevention programmes and the implementation of the Stay Safe Programme. The following curricular programmes will be implemented in the school with the specific purpose of alerting children to the danger of child abuse and providing them with the necessary skills for its prevention.
 - Stay Safe Programme
 - RSE Programme
 - SPHE
 - Religious Education

- To provide in-service education for teachers and to ensure that they have a good working knowledge of child protection issues and procedures. The Board of Management will promote in-service training for teachers and Board members to ensure they have a good working knowledge of child protection issues and procedures.

- To set out clear procedures concerning action to be taken where allegations are received against school employees. St. Joseph's BNS will follow procedure as listed in the *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools* in chapter 5.

- To encourage safe practice for those who work with children and to safeguard those who work with the children from the consequences of unfounded allegations using the following for guidance
 - Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary
 - Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children, Department of Children and Youth Affairs
 - Schools, Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE): Best Practice Guidelines for Primary Schools Circular 0022/2010
 - The following school policies and practices are particularly relevant and focus on child protection in St. Joseph's BNS:
 - Acceptable Use Policy for Internet Usage
 - Anti-bullying Policy
 - Code of Behaviour
 - Contact with other schools and transition to second level
 - Data Protection Policy
 - Extra-curricular activities/classes.
 - Keeping of class records and roll books and transfer of essential information
 - Pupil Attendance Policy
 - RSE policy
 - Supervision of Pupils: in class, outside, and at arrival and dismissal time of pupils

- Sporting Activities
- Special Needs Education Policy
- School Outings and Tours
- Substitute Teachers
- Teacher Safety Policy
- Teaching Practice Students from the Teacher Training Colleges
- Use of mobile phones
- Work Placements from Post Primary schools,
- Vetting 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.

6. 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.

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

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on _____[date]

Signed: _____ Signed: _____

Chairperson of Board of Management Principal

Date: _____ Date: _____

Date of next review: _____