



## **Child Protection Policy of Stepside Educate Together National School.**

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 Stepside Educate Together National School 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 Anne Carroll
3. The Deputy Designated Liaison Person (Deputy DLP) is Mallaidh Milotte
4. In its policies, practices and activities, Stepside Educate Together National School 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. School policies, practices and activities that are particularly relevant to child protection include: Code of Behaviour/Anti-bullying Policy/Garda vetting policy and SPHE 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.

### **Details of Policy:**

#### **Introduction**

Stepaside Educate Together National School has adopted the Department of Education and Skills Guidelines and Procedures in relation to Child Protection and Welfare. These Guidelines are laid out in the **Children First** document. This policy clarifies how our school proposes to implement these guidelines in order to ensure the protection and welfare of all children attending our school.

#### **School Philosophy and Ethos**

Children enrolled in Stepside Educate Together National School will be supported in reaching their full potential: mentally, spiritually, emotionally and socially. This support will be differentiated in an atmosphere and environment in which children feel safe, valued and secure and in which respect for self and others is an everyday occurrence.

Our school operates under the patronage of Educate Together. The four underlying principles of our ethos are:

- ❖ Co-educational
- ❖ Child-centred
- ❖ Multi-denominational
- ❖ Democratically run

#### **Aims**

To raise awareness of the importance of Child Protection (physical, emotional, sexual and neglect) among all school staff (including teachers, SNAs, Secretary, Ancillary Staff etc.).

To put in place clear procedures for all school personnel dealing with suspicions and allegations of child abuse.

To identify curricular content and resources, that contribute to the prevention of child abuse and to enable children to properly deal with abuse if it occurs.

To promote the welfare of all pupils in our care.

#### **Content**

It is the policy of the school to follow the procedures as laid down in Child Protection Guidelines and Procedures DES 2011 in any case where we suspect, or are alerted to, child abuse, including where a child discloses abuse. All disclosures will be documented, dated and kept on file by the DLP. **All disclosures will be treated in a highly confidential manner.**

The Board of Management has appointed the Principal - Anne Carroll as the Designated Liaison Person (DLP) in our school to have specific responsibility for child protection.

The Deputy DLP is Mallaidh Milotte.

#### **Roles and Responsibilities**

- ❖ The Board of Management has primary responsibility for the care and welfare of all pupils.
- ❖ The DLP has specific responsibility for Child Protection in the school.
- ❖ All staff have a duty of care to ensure that arrangements are in place to protect children from harm.

## Procedures

The procedures for dealing with allegations/suspicions/disclosures of Child Abuse are set down in the **Children First Guidelines 2011** and will be followed

**Reference: Chapter Three – Basis for Reporting Concerns and Standard Reporting Procedure pages 13-17**

## Organisational Implications

- **Supervision** – Every effort will be made to ensure that there is comprehensive supervision of children throughout the school day. A roster of staff duty will be drawn up and displayed in the Staff Room and in the Principal's Office. Teachers will ensure that all children are visible in the school yard/ play area. Children will not leave the school yard unsupervised or engage with adults outside of the school yard.
- **Visitors** – All unscheduled visitors to the school are expected to report to the office upon arrival. In the absence of the Secretary, there will be a security code/ buzzer entry to enter the school. The principal will take responsibility for this.
- **Bullying** – Bullying behaviour will be addressed under our Anti-Bullying Policy. If the behaviour involved is of a sexual nature or regarded as being particularly abusive, the matter will be referred to the DLP.
- **Behaviour** – Children are encouraged at all times to play co-operatively and to show respect for themselves and others. Our Positive Behaviour Policy clarifies this.
- **Toilets** – It is school policy that only one person is allowed to enter the toilet at a time. Children who need to use the toilet during yard time must seek the permission of the teacher on yard.
  - If a child has a wetting accident during the school day, a member of staff will provide them with dry clothes to change into. Before assisting the child the staff member will inform a second staff member and the second staff member will remain in the room/corridor outside the toilet area with the door open.
  - It is school policy to call a Parent/Guardian if a child soils themselves in school and requires intimate care. In the unlikely event of failing to make contact, staff will follow the above procedure. All accidents of this nature will be reported to Parents/Guardians.
- **Staff Cars** – In instances where a staff car must be used to transport a child, children should never be taken alone.
- **School Tours/Trips** – School staff accompanying children on school tours/trips (including after school sporting events) will deliver a duty of care appropriate with the trip/venue. The higher the risk factor, the higher the number of teachers/responsible adults involved. Hired buses/vehicles must provide safe transportation and a functioning seatbelt for every child/adult.
- **Induction of Teachers and Ancillary Staff** – It is the responsibility of the DLP to inform all new teachers and ancillary staff of the Children First Guidelines.
- **Attendance** – School attendance is monitored carefully. We will issue an email relating to a child's poor attendance, and inform Tusla, child and family agency (formerly-The NEWB-National Educational Welfare Board) if a child is absent for more than twenty days.
- **Curricular Implications**
  - The Stay Safe Programme will be taught throughout the school.

- The SPHE Programme will be supported by the Walk Tall Programme and the RSE Programme.
- Our Learn Together Programme will also enhance the children's learning regarding personal safety.

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on: September 2012

Date of most recent review: April 11<sup>th</sup> 2016

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

Aidan Gallagher, Chairperson of Board of Management.

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

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

Anne Carroll, Principal

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

Date of next review: November 2016

**Highlighted Concern form**

**Date:**

**Time:**

**Child:**

**Handed over to DLP on (Date):**

## **Child Protection Guidelines Checklist for School Employees**

**Designated Liaison Person: Anne Carroll**

**Deputy Designated Liaison Person: Mallaidh Milotte**

### **If a child discloses information to you:-**

- Listen
- Do not ask leading questions
- Offer reassurance but do not promise not to tell
- Explain that other adults may need to be told - DLP
- Do not stop the child speaking
- Do not over react or comment
- Inform DLP - If you have a reasonable suspicion or reasonable grounds for concern that a child is at risk or has suffered abuse, the DLP should contact the Health Board for advice
- At the earliest opportunity, record accurately what the child has said – Using the child's own words. Record date/time and context of the disclosure. Use child's registration number – Not child's name
- Facts only
- Sketch signs of physical injury if appropriate
- Retain records for a period of 21 years in keeping with the school's Record Keeping Policy

### **The following should also be reported to the DLP:**

- An account from a person who saw a child being abused
- Injury consistent with abuse
- Dysfunctional behaviour
- Implausible explanations for injury or behaviour
- Consistent evidence over a period of time that a child is being emotionally or physically neglected

### **Health Board Response:**

- School is asked to monitor the situation
- Formal report is requested , sent by DLP and on receipt case is allocated to Social Worker
- Preliminary enquiry – Screening process
- Initial assessment

### **Possible outcomes:**

- Case closed
- Family support
- Child Protection Plan (usually following a case conference)



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte  
Health Service Executive

**PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL**

**STANDARD FORM FOR REPORTING CHILD PROTECTION AND/OR WELFARE CONCERNS**

**In case of Emergency or outside Health Board office hours, contact should be made with An Garda Síochána**

**A. To Principal Social Worker:** \_\_\_\_\_

**1. Details of Child:**

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Male:**      **Female:**

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Age/D.O.B.:** \_\_\_\_\_

**School:** \_\_\_\_\_

**1a. Name of Mother:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Name of Father:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address of Mother if different to Child:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Telephone Number:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address of Father if different to Child:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Telephone Number:** \_\_\_\_\_

**1b. Care and Custody arrangements regarding child, if known:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**1c. Household Composition:**

Name	Relationship to Child	Date of Birth	Additional Information e.g. School/Occupation


**Note: A separate report form must be completed in respect of each child being reported.**

- 2. Details of concern(s), allegation(s) or incident(s) dates, times, who was present, description of any observed injuries, parent's view(s), child's view(s) (if known).**

Please state primary reason for referral:

- 3. Details of person(s) allegedly causing concern in relation to the child:**

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Age:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Male:**

**Female:**

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Relationship** \_\_\_\_\_ **to** \_\_\_\_\_ **Child:**

**Occupation:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

- 4. Name and Address of other personnel or agencies involved with this child:**

**Social Workers:** \_\_\_\_\_

**School:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Public Health Nurse:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Gardai:** \_\_\_\_\_

**G.P.:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Pre-School/Crèche/Youth Club** \_\_\_\_\_

**Hospital:** \_\_\_\_\_



Other, Specify e.g. Youth Groups, After School Clubs: \_\_\_\_\_

5a. Are Parents/Legal Guardians aware of this referral to the Social Work Department?      Yes  
No

5b. Are the Parents/Legal Guardians supportive      Yes      No

6. Details of Person reporting concerns: (Please see Guidance Notes re. Limitations of confidentiality)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Occupation: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Nature and extent of contact with Child/Family:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

7. Details of Person completing form:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Occupation: \_\_\_\_\_

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

#### Guidance Notes:

Health Boards have a statutory responsibility under the Child Care Act, 1991, to promote the welfare and protection of children in their area. Health Boards therefore have an obligation to receive information about any child who is not receiving adequate care and/or protection.

This reporting form is for use by:

- ☐ Health Board Personnel
- ☐ Professionals and individuals in the provision of child care services in the community who have service contracts with the health boards
- ☐ Designated person in a voluntary or community agency
- ☐ Any professional, individual or group involved in services to children who becomes aware of a child protection or welfare concern, or to whom a child protection or child welfare concern is reported.

Please fill in as much information and detail as is known to you. (Health Board personnel should do this in consultation with their line manager). This will assist the Social Work Department in assessing the level of risk to the child, or support services required. If the information requested is not known to you, please indicate by putting a line through the question. It is likely that a social worker will contact you to discuss your report.

Health Boards aim to work in partnership with parents. If you are making this report in confidence you should note that the Health Board cannot guarantee absolute confidentiality as:

- A Court could order that information be disclosed.
- Under the Freedom of Information Act, 1997, the Freedom of Information Commissioner may order that information be disclosed.

You should also note that in making a 'bona fide report' you are protected under the Protection for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act, 1998.

If you are unsure if you should report your concerns, please telephone the duty social worker and discuss your concerns with him/her

Chairperson of BoM: \_\_\_\_\_

Date:

Anne Carroll (Principal and DLP) \_\_\_\_\_ Date: