



Holywell,

Swords,
Co. Dublin.

Ireland.

K67AP99

Phone:014444386

Fax:014442960

Roll No. 20348F

Email:principa@holywellets.ie

Website:www.holywellets.ie

Principal: Maria Boyne

Holywell Educate Together National School

Child Protection Policy

This policy has been formulated by Holywell ETNS to comply with Child Protection Guidelines for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017, Children First Guidelines, legislation and Department of Education and Skills circulars.

Contents

School Details:	2
Introductory Statement	3
Rationale	3
School Philosophy and Ethos.....	3
Aims	3
Guidelines for school personnel	4
1.0 APPOINTMENT OF A DESIGNATED LIAISON PERSON (DLP).....	4
2.0 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES	4
2.1 Role of the Board of Management (BOM).....	4
<i>Procedures for BOM in cases of allegations or suspicions of child abuse by a school employee:</i>	5
2.2 Role of the Staff Members.....	6
<i>Guidelines for teachers and staff members in handling disclosures from children</i>	6
<i>Suspicions of Abuse</i>	7
2.3 Role of the Designated Liaison Person (DLP).....	7
<i>Guidelines for the DLP in handling reported concerns and disclosures</i>	8
3.0 CHILD PROTECTION MEETING/CASE CONFERENCE	8
4.0 ORGANISATIONAL IMPLICATIONS	9
5.0 CURRICULUM IMPLICATIONS.....	12
Success Criteria	12
Timeframe for Implementation.....	12
Timeframe for Review	12
Ratification and Communication	12
Summary Strategy.....	13

School Details:

Name: Holywell Educate Together National School

Address: Holywell
Swords
Co. Dublin
K67AP99

Telephone: (01)4444386

Email: principal@holywelletns.ie

Roll Number: 20348F

Principal: Maria Boyne

Introductory Statement

We believe that all children have the right to be safe in our society and that we must have in place procedures that will help protect them. This draft policy has been drawn up in line with the current recommendations and guidelines relating to child abuse prevention and child protection guidelines.

This policy is available to all staff members on the school Network and a copy of 'Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017', a copy of the '*Child Protection Guidelines and Procedures*' (DES, 2001) and '*Children First*' (Dept. Health and Children, 1999) is available to all in the staff library, to allow all staff members to familiarise themselves with correct child protection procedures.

Rationale

This school has adapted the Child Protection Guidelines and Procedures, DES, 2001 in their entirety and wishes to detail in this policy the procedures that will be followed in relation to child protection.

School Philosophy and Ethos

Children enrolled in Holywell 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

- Create a safe, trusting, responsive and caring environment for all pupils.
- To ensure that all staff are aware of what action to take when dealing with a child protection issue.
- Develop awareness and responsibility in the area of child protection amongst the whole school community.
- Put in practice procedures to protect all pupils and staff.
- Ensure that all staff members are aware of and familiar with 'Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017', "Children First" and DES guidelines and procedures in relation to reporting concerns and/or disclosures of child abuse.
- Provide for on-going training in this and related areas for all school staff.

Guidelines for school personnel

- 1.0 Appointment of a Designated Liaison Person
- 2.0 Roles and Responsibilities
 - 2.1 Role of the Board of Management
 - 2.2 Role of the Staff Members (Teachers, SNAs, Caretaker, Secretary)
 - 2.3 Role of the Designated Liaison Person (DLP)
- 3.0 Child Protection Meetings/Case Conferences
- 4.0 Organisational Implications
- 5.0 Curriculum Implications

1.0 APPOINTMENT OF A DESIGNATED LIAISON PERSON (DLP)

The Board of Management has appointed the Principal, Maria Boyne as the Designated Liaison Person (DLP) in Holywell Educate Together to have specific responsibility for child protection.

Deputy Principal Cathal Manning has been appointed as Deputy DLP to take the place of the DLP if she is unavailable for whatever reason.

The position of DLP will be addressed at the first meeting of each new Board of Management. The DLP will continue to act as such until such time as he/she is replaced by the BOM for whatever reason.

2.0 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Board of Management has primary responsibility for the care and welfare of their pupils.

The DLP has specific responsibility for child protection in the school.

All staff have a general duty of care to ensure that arrangements are in place to protect children from harm

2.1 Role of the Board of Management (BOM)

It is the primary responsibility of the Board of Management of Holywell Educate Together to protect the children within the school to whom they have a duty of care. 'Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017': chapters 3 & 8 are of greater relevance to the Board of Management. *The responsibilities of the Board of Management are outlined in p.50/51 of the Children First Guidelines and in p.15/17 of the Child Protection Guidelines (DES)*

- To arrange for the planning, development and implementation of an effective child protection programme.
- To monitor and evaluate its effectiveness.
- To provide appropriate staff development and training

Specifically the BOM will:

- Appoint a DLP and deputy DLP.
- Have clear procedures for dealing with allegations or suspicions of child abuse (See below)
- Monitor the progress of children at risk.

- Ensure that curricular provision is in place for the prevention of child abuse.
- Investigate and respond to allegations of child abuse against one of the school's employees which have been reported to the Health Service Executive (HSE) or Gardaí.
- To decide on teachers' attendance at child protection meetings/case conferences and to advise teachers before attending such meetings/conferences.

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.
- 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, she 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 she 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 he will always seek legal advice and base his response on this advice.
- 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 he will always seek legal advice and base his 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 – 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.

2.2 Role of the Staff Members

Staff are provided with copies of the following guidelines and it is the responsibility of all staff to familiarise themselves with the guidelines.

- *'Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017': Chapters 3-5.*
- *Child Protection Guidelines and Procedures, DES, 2001*
- *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 & Standard Reporting Procedures*
 - *Appendix 1 Signs and Symptoms Of Child Abuse*

Guidelines for teachers and staff members in handling disclosures from children

Where a child discloses alleged abuse to a staff member, the person receiving that information should listen carefully and supportively. Great care must be taken not to abuse the child's trust. This should not be a formal interview.

The following advice is offered:

- Listen to the child.
- 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.
- Confidentiality should not be assured - explain that further help may have to be sought.

- Record the discussion accurately noting
 - *What, where and when?*
 - *Descriptions and possible sketches of physical injuries.*
 - *Explanations of injuries using direct quotations if appropriate.*
- Retain the record securely.
- The staff member should obtain only necessary relevant facts. It is not the responsibility of school personnel to investigate allegations of abuse.
- The DLP should then be informed and given relevant records.
- If the suspected abuser is the DLP then the suspicion and any records will be passed on to the Chairperson who will proceed as per guidelines.

Suspicious of Abuse

- Staff members who suspect abuse should refer to : ‘Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017’
- *Chapter 2: Definition & Recognition of Child Abuse*
- *Chapter 4: Statutory Obligations on Registered Teachers*
- *Chapter 5: Reporting of Concerns*
- 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.

2.3 Role of the Designated Liaison Person (DLP)

- The DLP acts as a liaison with outside agencies, HSE, Gardaí and other parties with child protection concerns
- The DLP will inform all school personnel of the availability of the Child Protection Guidelines and Procedures, DES and ‘Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017’ and ‘Children First’ Guidelines in the school. S/he will circulate the DES guidelines and photocopy/circulate to all staff Chapters 3 & 4 & Appendix 1 of the Children First guidelines and advise on good practice
- The DLP will be available to staff for consultation regarding suspicions or disclosures of abuse. She will keep records of these consultations.
- The DLP will seek advice from the HSE.
- The DLP will report suspicions and allegations of child abuse to the HSE or/and An Garda Síochána based on this advice.
- The DLP will maintain proper records in a secure, confidential manner and in a secure location.
- The DLP will keep up to date on current developments regarding child protection.

Guidelines for the DLP in handling reported concerns and disclosures

- Where the DLP/Deputy DLP have concerns about a child, but are not sure whether to report the matter to the HSE, they should seek appropriate advice. To do this the DLP/Deputy should make informal contact with the assigned (on duty) Social Worker. The DLP/Deputy in this case, should be explicit that she is requesting advice and not making a report. If advised to report the matter, the DLP will act on that advice.
- A report will then be made to the HSE by the DLP/Deputy in person, by telephone or in writing. In the event of an emergency or non-availability of HSE staff, the report should be made to the Gardaí. The DLP should also report the matter to the Chairperson of the BOM, who should then follow the procedures as outlined in Chapter 5 of 'Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017', Chapter 4 (Section 4.3) of Children First National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children, 1999.
- A standard reporting form is completed by the DLP/Deputy as comprehensively as possible (See Appendix 1, Child Protection Guidelines and Procedures, DES).
- Parents/guardians will normally be informed that a report is being made. It may be decided that informing the parent/carer is likely to endanger the child or place the child at further risk. The decision not to inform the parent/carer should be briefly recorded together with the reasons for not doing so.
- When the allegation is against the DLP, the chairperson then assumes responsibility for reporting the matter to the HSE and filling in the standard reporting form.
- Where there are allegations or suspicions of Peer Abuse the DLP will follow the same procedures.
 - Parents of all parties will be notified and the DLP will inform the Chairperson.
 - Principal and class teachers will make arrangements to meet separately with all parents, to resolve the matter.
 - The school will make arrangements to minimise the possibility of the abusive behaviour recurring.

3.0 CHILD PROTECTION MEETING/CASE CONFERENCE

- 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 pg.48 of 'Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017', pgs. 149 – 155 of Children First Guidelines, 1999; pgs. 13-14 Child Protection Guidelines and Procedures, DES.

4.0 ORGANISATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

School procedures already in place and new procedures being put in place will be examined with reference to the 'Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017', Children First Guidelines and any Child Protection issues that may arise will be addressed.

The following policies have been addressed in this review:

- *Accidents*
- *Attendance*
- *Behaviour*
- *Bullying*
- *Children travelling in staff cars*
- *Communication*
- *Induction of staff*
- *Induction of pupils*
- *Record keeping*
- *Supervision*
- *Swimming*
- *Toileting*
- *Visibility*
- *Visitors*
- *Intimate Care Needs*
- *One to one teaching*
- *Garda Vetting*
- *Internet Use*
- *Mobile Phones*

Accidents

While every precaution will be taken under our Health and Safety Statement to ensure the safety of children, we realise that accidents will happen. Accidents will be noted in our Incident book and will be addressed under our accident policy as part of Health and Safety.

Attendance

Our school attendance will be monitored as per our attendance policy. With regards to child protection we will pay particular attention to trends in non-attendance. We will also monitor non-attendance in correlation with signs of neglect/physical/emotional abuse.

Behaviour

Children are encouraged at all times to play co-operatively and inappropriate behaviour will be addressed under our Code of Behaviour. If an incident occurs which we consider to be of a sexualised nature we will notify the DLP who will record it and respond to it appropriately.

Bullying

Bullying behaviour will be addressed under our Anti-Bullying policy. If the behaviour involved is of a sexualised nature or regarded as being particularly abusive then the matter will be referred to the DLP.

Children travelling in staff cars

Members of the school staff will not carry children alone in their cars at any time. Where possible children will be transported by taxi/bus.

Communication

Every effort will be made to enhance pupil-teacher communication. If pupils have concerns they will be listened to sympathetically. The SPHE/Oral Language/RE programmes allow for open pupil-teacher communication, which is hoped will aid the pupil-teacher relationship. If teachers have to communicate with pupils on a one-to-one basis, they are requested to leave the classroom door open. Further details on communications are found in the school's Communication Policy.

Induction of Staff

The DLP will be responsible for informing all new teachers and ancillary staff of the 'Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017', Child Protection Guidelines and Procedures, DES, 2001 and Children First Guidelines, 1999. The DLP will give a copy of the Child Protection Guidelines and Procedures, Chapters 3 & 4 and Appendix 1 of Children First and this Child Protection Policy to all new staff. All new teachers are expected to teach the designated SPHE objectives for their class. Holywell Educate Together is responsible for the mentoring of new teachers and will be responsible for supporting new teachers as they implement the SPHE objectives. Holywell Educate Together is also responsible for ensuring that new teachers know how to fill in the roll book correctly and informing the teacher of record keeping procedures within the school.

Induction of Pupils

All parents and children will be made aware of attendance rules and their implications as laid down in the Education Welfare Act (2000). All parents will be informed of the programmes in place in the school that deal with personal development e.g. RSE, Walk Tall, Stay Safe and SPHE. All new parents are given a copy of the school's enrolment policy, which outlines the procedures parents and children should use when contacting the school if there are absences or concerns of an educational/personal/family matter. Parents are encouraged to make an appointment with the class teacher/principal if they wish to discuss their child's progress. All parents are given a copy of the school's Code of Behaviour and Anti-Bullying policies.

Record Keeping

Teachers will keep each child's file updated with results of assessments carried out, dates and details of meetings with parents and notes from parents. The records secure at all times. Roll books will be updated daily. Sensitive information regarding children will be shared on a need-to-know basis. All educational files of pupils who no longer attend this school are kept in the filing cabinet in the principal's office for 5 years. Further details on record keeping are found in the school's Record Keeping Policy.

Supervision

The school's supervision policy will be followed by all staff to ensure that there is comprehensive supervision of children at all breaks and before and after school. A further rota will be displayed to cover 10 o'clock and 12 noon breaks. See supervision policy for agreed rules around break-times, procedures around teacher absences.

Swimming(when relevant)

Children will be brought in their own parent's cars to the swimming pool. Parents will assist with supervision in the changing rooms in order to ensure the children's safety. All adults will act in 'loco parentis' and as such will act as prudent parents in helping children to return home as dry as possible. Parent helpers will be briefed on swimming procedures.

Toileting

(1) **Wetting:** Children will be provided with clean clothes to change themselves. If child is unable to change themselves without help, 2 staff members will assist child.

(2) **Soiling:** Parents will always be contacted for soiling incidents. Clean clothes and wipes will be provided for children who can clean and change themselves. The parents of children who are unable to

clean and change themselves will be asked to come to the school to clean and change the child. In the event of the parent being unavailable and they agree to it a teacher/SNA will help the child to change in the presence of another member of staff.

Visibility

Teachers will ensure that children are visible in the school playground. Children will not be allowed to spend time in classrooms or toilets where they would not be under adult supervision. They are not to leave the school playground or to engage with adults who are outside of the school playground.

Visitors

The class teacher will always stay with their class (e.g. visitors/ guests/coaches/trips/parent-child classes/workshops etc.)

Teachers on playground duty will be aware of visitors entering the school playground and will ascertain their intentions. They will be supervised in the discharge of their business.

Intimate Care Needs

- Children with specific toileting/intimate care needs – a procedure will be agreed between the teachers, SNAs and parents in question.

One to One Teaching

- During one to one teaching the door will be left open.

Garda Vetting

- Garda vetting of teaching and non-teaching staff as outlined in DES circular 94/06 is mandatory for the recruitment and selection of all staff.

Internet Use

- An Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) will be implemented in the school.

Mobile Phones

- Our Mobile Phone Policy states that phones may not be used by pupils at any time during the school day, on the school grounds. Teachers/Classroom staff may not use their phone during teaching time.

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 event should be made and reported to the Principal and the BOM.

5.0 CURRICULUM 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.

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
- Assessment of these procedures by participants following a child protection case
- Feedback from all staff

Timeframe for Implementation

These procedures will be implemented following ratification by the BOM.

Timeframe for Review

- At the first staff meeting of every year the DLP will remind all teachers of the guidelines and copies of 'Safeguarding Statement' on Child Protection, Chapters 3,4,5, of Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017, 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 & Deputy DLP
- (Principal) if not acting as DLP
- All Staff

Ratification and Communication

This policy was reviewed by the Board of Management in November 2014 and is subject to further review in January 2016.

The policy accessible to parents of children in the school on our website www.holywelletns.ie. A copy of the policy can be given to parents from the school office on request. Arrangements were made to communicate the policy to all parents at the start of each school year.

Summary Strategy

DLP and Deputy DLP	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Principal (Maria Boyne) will act as the Designated Liaison Person and the Deputy Principal (Cathal Manning) will act as the Deputy Liaison Person and in their absence Mark Brennan.
BOM	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Chairperson of the Board of Management (Denis Brennan) is responsible for Child Protection
Lines of Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Clear lines of communication are in place if any member of the school personnel suspects that a child may be a victim of abuse.
Highlighted Concern Form	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All concerns are written on the Highlighted Concern Form and then handed to the DLP or Deputy DLP who then takes the appropriate action.
Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The DLP and his deputy regularly attend training and then update school personnel of changes in procedures etc.