

St. Brendan's National School

Child Protection Policy

Rationale

Under the child act 1991 the following policy has been adopted by the B.O.M of the above school.

In order to ensure the safety of all children in our care and to clarify the situation for staff, it is deemed necessary to formulate a policy outlining the procedures in relation to reporting suspected child abuse.

Partnership to School Ethos

St. Brendan's promotes a caring environment where student's needs are considered and protected, Staff recognize the need for a policy on reporting suspected child abuse in order to protect the children and ensure that they receive the care, specialist help and protection they require.

Aims

- 1) To implement the Child Protection Guidelines and procedures for Primary Schools.
- 2) To inform staff of the procedures for reporting abuse

- 3) To assist staff in understanding the process of reporting and the likely outcomes
- 4) To appoint a Designated Liaison Person (DPL) from the staff

Definition

“Child abuse can be categorized into four different types:-

- 1) Neglect
- 2) Emotional Abuse
- 3) Physical Abuse
- 4) Sexual Abuse

A child may be subjected to more than one form of abuse at any given time”.
(Children First)

St Brendan will deal with any or all of the above-mentioned categories, where deemed necessary.

Legal Framework

The Board of Management recognizes 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 Brendan's N.S. 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 is Niall Mulvey (Principal).
- The Deputy Designated Liaison Person is Anne Meehan (Deputy Principal).
- In it's policies, practices and activities, St Brendan's N.S. will adhere to the following principles of best practice in child protection and welfare:
 - Recognize 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 pupil with a special vulnerability.
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- The school policies, practices and activities that are particularly relevant to child protection at St Brendan's include our Code of Discipline policy/anti bullying Policy, Pupil attendance Strategy, Supervision of Pupils, Sporting activities during and after school, school outings, TY work placements, Drama and concert events, swimming classes, sporting coaches from local clubs coaching at our school.
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- 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.
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- This policy has been made available to school personnel and the Parent's Association and is readily accessible to parent's on request. A copy of this policy will be made available to the Department and the patron if requested.
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- This policy will be reviewed by the Board of Management once in every school year.

Stages in Procedure for Reporting Abuse

- (1) If a member of staff has reasonable grounds for reporting abuse, they should report in writing their concerns to the Designated Liaison Person. Staff should note carefully what they have observed / what has been reported to them and when this occurred. Signs of physical injury should be described clearly. Patterns of behaviour should be carefully noted.
- (2) The D.L.P has a duty to report the matter to the appropriate Health Board who in turn have a duty to investigate suspected abuse and to determine what action to take, including informing the Gardai. The D.L.P should complete the Standard Reporting Form as comprehensively as possible, including all available information. The Chairperson of the B.O.M should be informed when such a report is being made. (The child is not identified to the Chairperson, they are just informed that a report is being made)
- (3) Parents should be informed when a report is being made to the Health Board and made aware of school policy on reporting.
- (4) All records relating to the report should be regarded as highly confidential and retained in a secure location by the D.L.P
- (5) A Child Protection Conference may be convened by the Health Board investigating the report. The D.L.P and others involved may be invited to attend. It is expected that reasonable notice of such conferences will be given and that substitute cover will be available. A report on the conference should be received from the Health Board and filed with the report securely.