



St Brendan's N.S. Loughshinny

Child Protection Policy

Child Protection Policy

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 recognise 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

- Health Boards should always be notified where a person has a reasonable suspicion or reasonable grounds that abuse has happened or is happening.
- Reasonable grounds may constitute
 - specific information from a child
 - witness account
 - evidence such a injury or behaviour consistent with abuse
 - presence of corroborative indicates, eg. Pattern of injury or behaviour

- A suspicion, which is not supported by any objective indication of abuse or neglect, would not constitute a “reasonable” suspicion or “reasonable grounds.”
- Information should only be shared on a “need to know” basis and be kept confidential.
- Parents/Guardians should be informed of a report being made to the Health Board unless doing so is likely to endanger the child or place the child at further risk
- School staff is not responsible, nor is it appropriate for them to make enquiries of parents/guardians in some cases it may be counter-productive for them to do so.
- Staff making reports based on “reasonable grounds” are protected under the Protection for persons reporting child act 1998.
- The D.L.P for St. Brendan’s is Kathy Lundy.
- The Deputy D.L.P person is Carole Doyle.

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.

The Board of Management adopted this policy on _____

Signed: _____

(Chairperson of the Board of Management)

Signed: _____

(Principal)