

St. Peter's Primary School

Child Protection Policy

Schools have an obligation to provide students with the highest possible standard of care in order to promote their well-being and protect them from harm. School personnel are especially well placed to observe changes in behaviour, failure to develop or outward signs of abuse in children.

- Mindful of this primary duty of care, the Board of Management of St. Peter's Primary School fully endorses '*Children First*', the designed guidelines for the protection and welfare of children issued by the Department of Children and Youth Affairs, July 2011. We will fully adopt and implement these guidelines without modification.
- The school will fully implement the stay safe programme.
- The Board nominates Ms. Emer Whyte as the Designated Liaison Person (DLP) to act as liaison with outside agencies such as health boards and as a resource person to any staff having child protection concerns.
- In the absence of Ms. Emer Whyte, Mr. David Foley will act as Deputy Designated Liaison Person.
- The Board will ensure that appropriate and on-going training as necessary will be available for the DLP and DDLP.
- The Board fully endorses arrangements for the vetting of teaching and non-teaching staff as outlined in Circular 0063/2010 from the Department of Education and Science in June 2006.
- The Board will ensure that all school staff, teaching and non-teaching are aware of their obligations under the guidelines detailed in '*Children First*' and the procedures to be followed in the event of concern. Each member of staff will be given the children's first guidelines to read. They will then be required to sign a sheet saying they have read and understand the guidelines.
- The Parents' Committee have been presented with the Child Protection Policy of St. Peter's Primary School and are aware who is the DLP and the Deputy DLP
- The Board recognises that it has two duties of care. The primary duty is to the protection, safety and welfare of the children attending St. Peter's Primary School. The Board as an employer, also has duties and responsibilities towards its employees.
- As an employer, the Board will seek legal advice if an allegation of abuse is made against a school employee.
- The Board will adhere to the protocol outlined in '*Child Protection and Guidelines and Procedures*', Department of Education and Science 2001 under Chapter 4, '*Allegations or Suspicions of Child Abuse by School Employees*', to authorise any actions required to protect the children in its care. The Board notes that school employees may be subject to erroneous or malicious allegations. Any allegation of abuse should be dealt with sensitively. The employee should be treated fairly which includes the right not to be judged in advance of a full and fair enquiry. The Board accepts that the principles of natural justice and fair procedures must be adhered to.

- The Board believes that the academic, personal and social development of children flourishes in a culture where good relationships are encouraged, people feel valued and respected and appropriate support is available for those in difficulty.
- The Board is committed to the maintenance of an environment where children feel secure, where they are encouraged to express themselves and are listened to. All children in the school will be made aware that there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried. In addition, opportunities will be included in the curriculum for children to develop skills they need to keep them safe.
- The Board of Management undertakes to circulate this Child Protection Policy statement to all parents and guardians at the time of enrolment and on a regular basis thereafter. This policy statement and '*Children First*' will also be available at the school office.
- This policy statement regarding Child Protection at St. Peter's Primary School applies to all staff, members of the Board of Management, volunteers and contractors working in the school. This policy statement will be subject to review at the start of each academic year forthwith.
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