

Ballinakill NS



Roll no. 17273G

Stay Safe and Intimate Care.

Introductory statement: The Board of Management along with the staff of Ballinakill N.S. have developed and agreed this policy in line with current recommendations and guidelines relating to child abuse prevention and child protection guidelines. This policy addresses the responsibilities of the school in the following areas;

- a) Prevention - curriculum provision
- b) Procedures - procedures for dealing with concerns/ disclosures
- c) Practice - best practice in child protection

Copies of this policy document and the appended section from the Department of Education and Science, Child Protection Guidelines and Procedures will be made available to all staff (policy document folder in each class). It is incumbent on all staff to familiarise themselves with 'Children First' and the Department of education and Science Child Protection Guidelines and Procedures.

Aims:

This policy aims to;

- Create a safe, trusting, responsive and caring environment by valuing each child's contribution and work through praise and encouragement.
- Provide a personal safety skills education which specifically addresses abuse and prevention for all children in the school. The children in our care may not always or may not be capable of talking about their problems. All staff should observe and spend time to get to know the children and how they may hide their worries and problems.
- Develop awareness and responsibility in the area of child protection amongst the whole school community.
- Put in place procedures for good practice to protect all children and staff.
- Ensure all staff members are aware of and familiar with the 'Children First' and the Department of Education and Science Guidelines and Procedures in relation to reporting concerns and / or disclosures of child

- abuse and bullying.
- Provide for ongoing training in this and related areas for all school staff.

Prevention;

Ballinakill N. S. uses the Stay Safe programme to provide education for children on abuse prevention. This programme is taught as part of the schools SPHE curriculum under strand unit Safety and Protection. Staff will make every effort to ensure that the messages of the programme are reinforced whenever possible.

Procedures;

All staff (teachers, ancillary, secretarial, caretaking etc.) in this school will follow the recommendation for reporting concerns or disclosures as outlined in the 'Children First' and the Department of Education and Science document, 'Child Protection Guidelines & Procedures'

The Board of Management of this school has appointed Gerard Fahy as designated Liaison Person (DPL) and Siobhan Casement as deputy DPL.

The staff and management of this school have agreed

- All concerns/ disclosures involving child protection/ child welfare will be reported on the first instance to the DPL (deputy DPL where appropriate)
- Each report to the DPL will be dated and signed by the person making that report.
- A strict adherence to maintaining confidentiality- information regarding concerns and disclosures of abuse should only be given on a 'need to know' basis. The staff and management of this school recognise the children's rights and will treat them with dignity and respect by
 - Not accepting threatening, violent or degrading behaviour
 - Telling children their rights and responsibilities
 - Treating the children as individuals
 - Involving children
 - Making time for children to talk
 - The right for all non-verbal children to communicate using augmentative/ alternative communication system

Stay Safe Programme; It is the policy of the school that the Stay Safe Programme is done each year with the pupils. Children are taught the content of the Stay Safe lessons in the classroom. Teachers and parents work together to ensure that children learn the skills they need to keep safe;

- Through the Stay Safe Programme each child would be taught how to complain in ways and language they know best
- Take away the secrecy in which abuse thrives
- Each child be made aware of their rights and that the school will protect them and not cover up problems

- All staff be aware of the school discipline code

Guidelines for Good Practice in Intimate Care.

a) Physical Contact

While physical contact may be used to comfort, reassure or assist a child, the following should be factors in determining its appropriateness;

- Is it acceptable to the child
- Is it open and not secretive
- The age and developmental stage of the child

School personnel should avoid doing anything of a personal nature for children that they can do for themselves

b) General Care

All staff to be involved in the following aspects of general care for pupils

- The planning and implementation of services
- Working as part of the multi-disciplinary team
- Pupil reviews
- General escorting duties where intimate care is not required
- Helping pupils with social skills I. e. eating, drinking, hair-washing and grooming, teeth cleaning, showering/bathing etc.
- Dressing and undressing of outer clothing
- The lifting and positioning of a pupil who is dressed

c) Privacy

Each pupil should be treated with dignity and his/her privacy ensured at all times. Privacy is an important issue and much intimate care can be carried out on a one to one basis. Quite apart from the practical difficulties the presence of two staff causes a loss of privacy and can imply a lack of trust in staff. Consequently, staff are supported to carry out the intimate care of pupils alone unless the task requires the presence of two people (i.e. where the male carer of a female pupil must have a female staff member present)

d) Language

- All staff to be consistent with the terminology used with each pupil. Keep sentences short and emphasise key words
- Accompany the language with non-verbal cues i. e. facial gestures and pointing, formal signs

e) Independence

Involves pupils as far as possible in their own intimate care. Staff should encourage pupils to do as much for themselves as possible

f) Self Image

At all times staff should encourage pupils to have a positive image of their own bodies. Confident, assertive people who feel their 'bodies belong to them' are less vulnerable. As well as basics like privacy, the approach that staff take to individuals intimate care, can convey many messages to them about their self image. Staff attitudes to the pupils intimate care is of paramount importance.

g) Safety

- Staff should be careful in aspects of care not to leave themselves open to the possibility of allegations and ensure that actions, comments or remarks cannot be misinterpreted
- It should be remembered that some pupils can make unfounded allegations and appropriate measures should be taken to ensure the protection of pupils and staff
- Although the possibility of allegations from male pupils against both male and female staff is generally less likely, staff should ensure that actions and remarks are not open to misinterpretation.
- Staff should avoid restraining pupils, except where this is absolutely necessary to maintain safety.

Links to other Policy/ Planning Areas

Prevention SPHE curriculum, Strand Unit on Safety & Protection

Procedures Health & Safety Policy and Anti- Bullying Policy / Child Safeguarding Policy

Review and Monitoring

This policy will be monitored and reviewed by the Board of Management in two years.. The Board of Management will ensure that adequate training and support is provided for all staff.

Policy adopted by Board of Management on 17th December 2018

Reviewed February 2024

Ratified : _____

Signed; _____ Chairperson

_____ Principal