



Tuam Educate Together N.S.

Child Protection Policy

Introductory Statement:

The Board of Management recognises 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 Tuam Educate Together National School has agreed the following Child Protection Policy:

1. 1. 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.
2. 2. The Designated Liaison Person (DLP) is Nuala Bourke.
3. 3. The Deputy Designated Liaison Person is Fiona Feeney
4. 4. In its policies, practices and activities, Tuam Educate Together will adhere to the following principles of best practice in child protection and welfare:

The school will

- recognise 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.

This policy has been drawn up in line with the current recommendations and guidelines relating to child abuse prevention and child protection guidelines.

It addresses the responsibilities of the school in the following areas:

- a. Prevention – curriculum provision
- a. Procedures – procedures for dealing with concerns/disclosures
- a. Practice – best practice in child protection

An individual copy of this policy document and the DES Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools has been circulated to all staff. It is incumbent on all staff to familiarise themselves with the "Children First" guidelines and the DES Child Protection Procedures. This policy will be read through and reviewed at the first staff meeting of each school year.

This policy was first circulated to all parents for their information in August 2015 and feedback was discussed at staff and BOM level during the month of September 2015.

The policy was ratified by the Board of Management on __September 2015.

The policy is in line with DES Circular 0065/2011, November 2011.

Aims:

This policy aims to

1. Create a safe, trusting, responsive and caring environment for all pupils
2. Provide a personal safety skills education which specifically addresses abuse prevention for all children in the school
3. Develop awareness and responsibility in the area of child protection amongst the whole school community
4. Put in place procedures for good practice to protect all pupils and staff
5. Ensure that all staff members are aware of and familiar with the “Children First” and the DES guidelines and procedures in relation to reporting concerns and/or disclosures of child abuse
6. Provide for on-going training in this and related areas for all school staff

Prevention:

The “Stay Safe” programme is the primary resource used in this school to provide education for children on abuse prevention. The programme is taught as part of the school’s SPHE curriculum under the strand unit Safety and Protection/Personal Safety.

On enrolment of their child, parents will be informed at various meetings that the Stay Safe programme is used at all class levels in the school.

The “Stay Safe” Parents’ Guide is available on www.staysafe.ie/parent_guide.htm in the following languages:

English	Latvian
Irish	Lithuanian
Chinese	Polish
French	Spanish

The formal Stay Safe lessons will be taught in their entirety every year in every class, in accordance with the SPHE two-year cycle.

The Child Protection guidelines, our S.P.H.E. school plan and the “Stay Safe” programme will be outlined at the New Parents’ Meeting in June and again at each class meeting in September/October.

Staff will reinforce the messages of the programme whenever possible.

Procedures:

All staff (teachers, special needs assistants, ancillary staff etc.) in this school will follow the recommendations for reporting concerns or disclosures as outlined in ‘Children First’ and the DES document, ‘Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-primary Schools’

Practice:

The staff and BOM of this school have identified and adopted the following areas of good practice in relation to child protection.

- a. Visitors/Guests/Coaches/trips etc – pupils will always be supervised by a staff member
- b. Toileting accidents – The child’s clothes will be changed with two adults present. The child will be encouraged to change their own clothes as far as possible and will be assisted, where needed. Parents/guardians will be informed of the incident.
(The above will also apply to vomiting incidents where a parent/guardian cannot be contacted to come and collect their child)
- c. Children with specific toileting/intimate care needs – a procedure will be agreed with the parents.
- d. One-to-one teaching – Teachers and pupils will always remain visible through the glass panel in the door. If there is no glass panel, the door will be left open.

- e. Recruitment and selection of staff – Garda vetting of teaching and non-teaching staff as outlined in DES circular 0063/10 and 0031/2016
- f. Supervision of pupils – children will never be left unsupervised at school. In the case of a wet playtime, classroom doors will be left open and teachers rostered for yard duty will share the supervision of all classes while teachers have their lunch.
- g. Internet use – An Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) will be implemented in the school
- h. Mobile phones – phones may not be used by pupils at any time during the school day, on the school grounds.
- i. Swimming lessons: Teachers/ SNAs may get into the pool with the children, particularly in the cases of younger classes or where there is a requirement due to children with SEN, but will change separately. Pupils must be able to dry and dress themselves independently. Where multiple classes go swimming together, a female teacher plus one other female adult will supervise in the girls’ changing room and a teacher plus one other adult in the boys’ changing room. Where staffing provision does not allow for this level of supervision, two adults will supervise the children at all times or individual changing rooms will be used.
- j. Staff members will never give a child/children a lift in their car without another passenger.

It is important to note that while every effort will be made to adhere to best practice, as agreed and outlined above, in the event of an emergency or unforeseen occurrence this may not be possible or practicable. In such instances, a full record of an incident should be made and reported to the principal, parents of children involved and the Board of Management, as appropriate.

Links to other policy/planning areas:

Prevention: SPHE curriculum, strand unit on ‘Safety and Protection’

Procedures: School Code of Good Behaviour

- Substance Use Policy
- Health and Safety Statement
- Administration of Medications Policy
- Garda Vetting Policy
- Parental Involvement Policy
- Mobile Phone Policy

Review and Monitoring:

This policy will be reviewed by the Board of Management once in every school year, in line with DES Circular 0065/2011 or more often if the need arises. Staff will be requested to review school policy in this area at the beginning of each school year and every effort will be made to ensure that the attention of all new staff is drawn to the Child Protection policy and DES guidelines for schools.

The BOM will facilitate training and support for all staff members.

This policy is readily available to parents on request. A copy of this policy will be made available to the Department and the patron, if requested.

This updated policy was adopted by the Board of Management on _____

Signed: _____
(Chairperson of Board of Management)

Signed: _____
Nuala Bourke (Principal)

Date: _____

Date: _____

Date of next Review: _____