

**Presentation Primary School,
Station Road,
Portarlinton,
Co. Laois**



Presentation Primary School Mission Statement

We endeavour to provide a holistic Catholic education for each child, where respect and care for all, are central values.

Stay Safe Child Protection Policy

Patron:

Bishop of Kildare and Leighlin

Chairperson B.O.M.

Frank Smith

Principal

Cathal Ruane

Stay Safe Child Protection Policy

Introductory Statement

The staff, parents and management of Presentation Primary School have developed and agreed this policy in line with the 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

An individual copy 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.

It is incumbent on all staff to familiarise themselves with ‘Children First’ and DES child protection guidelines and procedures.

Aims

This policy aims to

- Create a safe, trusting, responsive and caring environment
- Provide a personal safety skills education which specifically addresses abuse prevention for all children in school.
- 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 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.
- Provide for ongoing 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 schools’ SPHE curriculum under the strand unit Safety and protection (Personal Safety). The formal lessons of the programme will be taught in their entirety every second year in accordance with the SPHE two-year cycle plan.

Staff will make every effort to ensure that the messages of the programme are reinforced whenever possible.

Procedures:

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

The Board of Management of this school has appointed **Cathal Ruane** as the Designated Liaison Person (DLP) and **Mairéad Terry** as the deputy DLP.

The staff and management of this school have agreed.

- All concerns/disclosures involving child protection /child welfare issues will be reported in the first instance to the DLP.
- Each report to the DLP will be dated and signed by the person making that report.
- A strict adherence to maintaining confidentiality – information regarding concerns or 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

Practice :

The staff and board of management of this school have identified the following as areas of specific concern in relation to child protection. Following discussion and consultation the staff and board of management have agreed that the following practices be adopted:

a. Physical contact

Physical contact between school personnel and the child should always be in response to the needs of the child and not the needs of the adult. While physical contact may be used to comfort, reassure or assist a child the following should be factors in determining it’s appropriateness:-

- It is acceptable to the child
- It is 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. Visitors / Guest Speakers

Visitors / Guest Speakers should never be left alone with pupils. The school (Principal/Teachers) has a responsibility to check out the credentials of the visitor/guest speaker and to ensure that the material in use by guests is appropriate.

c. Children with specific toileting/intimate care needs

In all situations where a pupil needs assistance with toileting / intimate care a meeting will be convened, after enrolment and before the child starts school, between parents/guardians, class teacher, special needs assistant, principal and if appropriate the pupil. The purpose of the meeting will be to ascertain the specific needs of the child and to determine how the school can best meet those needs. A written copy of what has been agreed will be made and kept in the child's file.

d. Toileting accidents:

Clean underwear and suitable clothing will be kept in the school so that if a pupil has an 'accident' of this nature they will in the first instance be offered fresh clothing into which they can change. The parents/guardians will be contacted.

e. Special Education Team

All Special Education Team members will operate in an open learning environment on all occasions. Parents of children who are involved will be informed and their written agreement sought. Special Needs Assistants work will be carried out under the direction of the Class teacher in an open environment.

f. Changing for Games / PE / Swimming

Pupils will be expected to dress and undress themselves for games/PE/swimming. Where assistance is needed this will be done in the communal areas and with the consent of parents. Under no circumstances will members of staff / volunteers be expected to or allowed to dress / undress a child in a cubicle / private area. In such situations where privacy is required the parent/guardian of the child will be asked to assist the child.

At all times there must be adequate supervision of pupils.

While every effort will be made to adhere to best practice as agreed and outlined above, in the event of an emergency where this is not possible or practicable a full record of the incident should be made and reported to principal and parents.

Links to other policy / planning areas:

Prevention: SPHE curriculum, Strand Unit on ‘Safety and Protection’
The School Code of Discipline
Health and Safety

Procedures: Code of Behaviour
Health and Safety Statement
Child Safeguarding Statement

Practice: Swimming Policy
School Tours / Outings
IT – Acceptable use policy

Ratification of Policy

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on _____ [date].

This policy has been made available to school personnel, published on the school website and provided to the Parents’ Association. A copy of this policy will be made available to the Department and the patron if requested.

This policy and its implementation will be reviewed by the Board of Management once in every school year. Written notification that the review has been completed will be made available to school personnel, published on the school website and provided to the Parents’ Association. A record of the review and its outcome will be made available, if requested, to the patron and the Department.

Signed: _____
(Chairperson of Board of Management)

Signed: _____
(Principal)

Date: _____

Date: _____

Date of next review: _____