



**Letterkenny**  
**Educate Together**  
**National School**  
ag fás le chéile - ag foghlaim le chéile

# Child Protection Policy

## Child Protection Policy of Letterkenny Educate Together

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 Letterkenny Educate Together has agreed the following child protection policy:

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. The Designated Liaison Person (DLP) is Aine Fabisiak
3. The Deputy Designated Liaison Person (Acting Deputy DLP) is Éadaoin Ní Mhianáin
4. In its policies, practices and activities, Letterkenny 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.

The school will also adhere to the above principles in relation to any adult pupil with a special vulnerability.

5. The following Letterkenny Educate Together National School policies are particularly relevant to this Child Protection Policy:

|                                   |                     |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------|
| Accidents                         | Attendance          |
| Positive Behaviour Policy         | Anti-Bullying       |
| Children Travelling in Staff Cars | Communication       |
| Induction of all New Staff        | Induction of Pupils |
| Record Keeping                    | Supervision         |
| P.E                               | Special Needs       |

6. This policy has been made available to school personnel and the Parents' Association (if any) and is readily accessible to parents on request. A copy of this policy will be made available to the Department and the patron if requested.

7. This policy will be reviewed by the Board of Management of Letterkenny Educate Together National School once in every school year. A checklist, to be used in undertaking the review is included at Appendix 2. The school will put in place an action plan to address any areas for improvement which might be identified in the annual review.

The Board of Management shall make arrangements to inform school personnel that the review has been undertaken. Written notification that the review has been undertaken shall be provided to the Parent Staff Association. A record of the review and its outcome shall be made available, if requested, to the patron, Educate Together and the DES. This policy will be reviewed by the Board of Management once in every school year.

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on \_\_\_\_\_[date]

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Chairperson of Board of Management Principal

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of next review: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Appendix 1**

### **Accidents**

While every precaution will be taken under our Health and Safety Statement to ensure the safety of children, we realise that accidents will happen. Accidents will be noted in our Incident book and will be addressed under our accident policy as part of Health and Safety.

### **Attendance**

The Attendance Policy states individual records of non-attendance will be kept and reviewed for patterns causing concern. Parents are requested to give written explanations for absences and NEWB guidelines are followed. The NEWB will be notified when a child misses 20 days or if the principal believes the attendance record of any pupil raises concerns. Records will be reviewed to investigate any correlation of non-attendance with signs of abuse.

### **Children travelling in staff cars**

Members of the school staff will not carry children alone in their cars at any time.

### **Code of Behaviour/Anti-Bullying:**

The future development of the school's Code of Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policies will highlight child protection issues e.g. sexualised behaviour, extreme bullying behaviour

Children are encouraged at all times to play co-operatively and inappropriate behaviour will be addressed under our Code of Behaviour. If an incident occurs which we consider to be of a sexualised nature we will notify the DLP who will record it and respond to it appropriately.

### **Bullying**

Bullying behaviour will be addressed under our Anti-Bullying policy. If the behaviour involved is of a sexualised nature or regarded as being particularly abusive then the matter will be referred to the DLP.

### **Supervision**

Children are under the constant supervision of a member of the teaching staff during school hours both on school grounds and on trips. Adequate supervision of the

playground, ratio of teacher to children, will be monitored by the Board of Management.

Teachers will ensure that children are visible in the schoolyard. Children will not be allowed to spend time in classrooms or toilets where they would not be under adult supervision. They are not to leave the school yard or to engage with adults who are outside of the school yard.

Teachers on yard duty will be aware of visitors entering the schoolyard and will ascertain their intentions. They will be supervised in the discharge of their business.

Inappropriate play will be dealt with by the supervising teacher and if necessary brought to the attention of the class teacher/ principal/parent.

### **PE/Extra-Curricular Activities**

Children will be accompanied and supervised by a teacher at all times while being transported to and from events and during events themselves. The required number of parent helpers will come along as in link with Health and Safety rules, 8:1 children: adults. Parent helpers are required to sign up to the Parental Involvement guidelines the school has developed.)

### **Communication**

Confidentiality is core to all school business. Records are kept in either lockable drawers or password protected electronic files. Information on sensitive matter is told on a need to know basis and not discussed in a non-secure environment. Pupil-teacher communication is emphasised within class, it is made clear to children that they can speak with their teacher in private. If teachers have to communicate with pupils on a one-to-one basis, they are requested to leave the classroom door open. If pupils have concerns they will be listened to sympathetically. The SPHE/Oral Language/RE programmes allow for open pupil-teacher communication, which is hoped will aid the pupil-teacher relationship. Meetings with parents are afforded privacy within the school, one-to-one interviews are offered to discuss any sensitive or confidential matters. Written or phone messages are passed on as general information with sensitive information only to be told/ given to those who need to know..

### **Induction of Teachers and Ancillary Staff**

The DLP will be responsible for informing all new teachers and ancillary staff of the Child Protection Guidelines and Procedures (DES 2001) and Children First Guidelines (1999), but particularly the recently published Children First - National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children (2011). The DLP will give a copy of Chapters 3 &

4 and Appendix 1 and this Child Protection Policy to all new staff. All new teachers are expected to teach the objectives in the SPHE programme. The principal is responsible for the mentoring of new teachers and will be responsible for supporting new teachers as they implement the SPHE objectives. The post holder for attendance record keeping is responsible for ensuring that new teachers know how to fill in the roll book correctly and DLP is responsible for informing the teacher of record keeping procedures within the school.

### **Induction of Pupils**

The future development of all policies, i.e. programmes of personal development (e.g. RSE, Walk Tall), enrolment policy, Code of Behaviour, Anti-Bullying Policy, etc. will consider any child protection issues and a summary of these policies will be made available to parents of children starting at the school at the start of each academic year.

All parents and children will be made aware of attendance rules and their implications as laid down in the Education Welfare Act (2000). All parents will be informed of the programmes in place in the school that deal with personal development e.g. RSE, Walk Tall and SPHE. Parents are encouraged to make an appointment with the class teacher/principal if they wish to discuss their child's progress.

All new parents/guardians will be given a copy of the school's enrolment policy, which outlines the procedures parents/guardians and children should use when contacting the school if there are absences or concerns of an educational/personal/family matter. Parents/guardians are encouraged to make an appointment with the class teacher/principal if they wish to discuss their child's progress. All parents will be given a copy of the school's positive Behaviour and Anti-Bullying policies in the Information Booklet.

### **Record Keeping**

Absence notes, records and other sensitive information will be secured in lockable filing cabinets or password protected electronic files. The password for the NEWB website will be released only to the principal and the post holder for record keeping. While filing online reports the computer will not be left unattended. The confidentiality of DLP files will be ensured by the DLP and access to this information will be under her supervision.

Teachers will keep each child's file updated with results of assessments carried out, dates and details of meetings with parents and notes from parents. Roll books will be updated daily. Sensitive information regarding children will be shared on a need-to-

know basis. All educational files of pupils who no longer attend this school are kept in the filing cabinet in the principal's office for 5 years.

### **Special Needs**

In future development of the Special Needs Policy attention shall be drawn to parent-teacher communication, resource teacher role in child safety/ adaptation of SPHE curriculum, ancillary staff, RSE, sexualised behaviour, appropriate social behaviour and so on.

The Board has ensured that the necessary policies, protocols or practices as appropriate are in place in respect of each of the above listed items.

## Appendix 2: Checklist for Annual Review of the Child Protection Policy

The Board of Management must undertake an annual review of its child protection policy and the following checklist shall be used for this purpose.

The checklist is designed as an aid to conducting this review and is not intended as an exhaustive list. Individual Boards of Management may wish to include other items in the checklist that are of particular relevance to the school in question.

As part of the overall review process, Boards of Management should also assess other school policies, practices and activities vis a vis their adherence to the principles of best practice in child protection and welfare as set out in the school's child protection policy.

Yes/No

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| Has the Board formally adopted a child protection policy in accordance with the 'Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools'? Yes/No                               |
| As part of the school's child protection policy, has the Board formally adopted, without modification, the 'Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools'? Yes/No    |
| Are there both a DLP and a Deputy DLP currently appointed? Yes/No  |
| Are the relevant contact details (HSE and An Garda Síochána) to hand? Yes/No   |
| Has the DLP attended available child protection training? Yes/No   |
| Has the Deputy DLP attended available child protection training? Yes/No  |
| Have any members of the Board attended child protection training? Yes/No   |
| Has the school's child protection policy identified other school policies, practices and activities that are regarded as having particular child protection relevance? Yes/No            |
| Has the Board ensured that the Department's "Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools" are available to all school personnel? Yes/No                             |
| Has the Board arrangements in place to communicate the school's child protection policy to new school personnel? Yes/No  |
| Is the Board satisfied that all school personnel have been made aware of their responsibilities under the 'Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools'? Yes/No     |
| Since the Board's last annual review, was the Board informed of any child protection reports made to the HSE/An Garda Síochána by the DLP? Yes/No  |
| Since the Board's last annual review, was the Board informed of any cases where the DLP sought advice from the HSE and as a result of this advice, no report to the HSE was made? Yes/No |
| Is the Board satisfied that the child protection procedures in relation to the making of reports to the HSE/ An Garda Síochána were appropriately followed? Yes/No                       |
| Were child protection matters reported to the Board appropriately recorded in the Board minutes? Yes/No  |
| Is the Board satisfied that all records relating to child protection are appropriately   |



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|---|
| filed and stored securely? Yes/No   |
|   |
| Has the Board ensured that the Parents' Association (if any), has been provided with the school's child protection policy? Yes/No   |
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| Has the Board ensured that the school's child protection policy is available to parents on request? Yes/No  |
| Has the Board ensured that the Stay Safe programme is implemented in full in the school? Yes/No   |
| (applies to primary schools)  |
| Has the Board ensured that the SPHE curriculum is implemented in full in the school? Yes/No   |
| Is the Board satisfied that the Department's requirements for Garda Vetting have been met in respect of all school personnel (employees and volunteers)? * Yes/No   |
| Is the Board satisfied that the Department's requirements in relation to the provision of a child protection related statutory declaration and associated form of undertaking have been met in respect of persons appointed to teaching and non-teaching positions? Yes/No* |
| Is the Board satisfied that, from a child protection perspective, thorough recruitment and selection procedures are applied by the school in relation to all school personnel (employees and volunteers)? Yes/No*   |
| Is the Board satisfied that the 'Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools' are being fully and adequately implemented by the school? Yes/No   |
| Has the Board identified any aspects of the school's child protection policy and/or its implementation that require further improvement? Yes/No   |
| Has the Board put in place an action plan containing appropriate timelines to address   |
| Has the Board ensured that any areas for improvement that that were identified in any previous review of the school's child protection policy have been adequately addressed? Yes/No  |

\*In schools where the VEC is the employer the responsibility for meeting these requirements rests with the VEC concerned. In such cases, this question should be completed following consultation with the VEC.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Principal

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Notification regarding the Board of Management's annual review of the child protection policy

To: \_\_\_\_\_

The Board of Management of \_\_\_\_\_ wishes to inform you that:

- The Board of Management's annual review of the school's child protection policy was completed at

the Board meeting of \_\_\_\_\_ [date].

- This review was conducted in accordance with the checklist set out in Appendix 2 of the Department's 'Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools'

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Principal