



Child Protection Policy

Introductory Statement

The staff, parents and management of Castlerock NS 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. Practise – best practice in child protection

An individual copy of this policy document and the appended section from the Department of Education and Skills Child Protection Guidelines and Procedures will be made available to all staff.

It is incumbent on all staff to familiarise themselves with '*Children First*', (National Guidance for Protection & Welfare of children 2017 and the 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 the 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 '*Children First*', (National guidance for Protection and Welfare of children 2017 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.

On enrolment, the child's parent will be informed that the Stay Safe programme is in use in the school and a copy of the Stay Safe 'A Parent's Guide' provided.

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.

Multiclass situations will be taught as follows:

Infant Room – Infants programme

1st & 2nd Programme

3rd & 4th Programme

5th & 6th Programme.

Lessons will be differentiated for pupils with additional needs in so far as possible; every effort will be made to ensure their understanding of the subject matter.

All staff will be involved in the implementation of this programme

Parents will be issued with a copy of the 'Parents Guide to the Stay Safe Programme'.

Procedures:

All staff (Teachers, SNA's, ancillary, secretarial etc.) in this school will follow the recommendations for reporting concerns or disclosures as outlined in '*Children First*' and '*Child Protection Procedures for Primary & Post-Primary Schools*' revised 2023.

The Board of Management of this school has appointed Carmel Burke as the designated liaison person (DLP) and Dolores Marren 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 (deputy DLP where appropriate).
- 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.
- A strict adherence to the Written Protocol for absenting employees from school for Child Safeguarding reasons (Appendix 1)

The following areas have been considered by the staff and Board of Management of this school 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 practises 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 determining its 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

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. Teachers remain in class during presentations.

c. Children with specific toileting/intimate care needs:

In all situations where a pupil needs assistance with toileting/intimate care a meeting is 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 best meet those needs. The staff to be involved in this care will be identified and provision will be made for occasions when the particular staff involved is absent. SNA will deal with intimate care/toileting needs. Any deviation from the agreed procedure will be recorded and notified to the DLP and the parents/guardians.

d. Toileting accidents:

If a pupil for whatever reason cannot clean or change themselves, the child will be assisted by an SNA. A record of all such incidents will be kept and principal and parents will be notified.

e. One-to-One teaching

It is the policy in this school that one-to-one teaching is often in the best interest of the child. Every effort will be made to ensure that this teaching takes place in an open environment. Parents of children who are to be involved in one-to-one teaching will be informed and their written agreement sought.

Work being carried out by special needs assistants will be carried out under the direction of the class teacher in an open environment.

f. Changing for Swimming

Pupils will be expected to dress and undress themselves for swimming. Where assistance is needed this will be done in the communal areas. Under no circumstances will members of staff 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 or parents.

Ratification

The Policy was ratified by the BOM of Castlerock N.S at a meeting on

10/2/26

Signed John [Signature]
Chairperson BOM

Date 10/2/26

Links to other policy / planning areas:

Prevention: SPHE curriculum, Strand Unit 'Safety & Protection'

The School Code of Behaviour

Bí Cinéalta Policy

Children First:

[https://www.tusla.ie/uploads/content/Childrne First National Guidance 2017](https://www.tusla.ie/uploads/content/Childrne%20First%20National%20Guidance%202017)

pdf

Child Protection Procedures for Primary & Post Primary School Revised 2023

Procedures: Anti-bullying Policy

Health & Safety Statement

Stay Safe Programme Policy

Bí Cinéalta

**Written Protocol for Absenting Employees from School for Child
Safeguarding Reasons**

Practice: School Outings Poilcy

SNA Policy