

BOYLE PAROCHIAL SCHOOL

CHILD SAFEGUARDING STATEMENT

Section 1: Service Provided

Boyle Parochial School is a mainstream primary school operating under direction of the Department of Education and Skills (DES). It is under the patronage of the Church of Ireland and is managed by the school's Board of Management (BOM).

The school provides primary education, in compliance with the Primary School Curriculum (NCCA, 1998), for students aged 4 upwards, in classes Junior Infants to Sixth Class.

Boyle Parochial School strives to provide a safe, positive learning environment and aims to instil confidence, character and compassion to make the children's experience the best it can be. The school offers children participation in a challenging curriculum with an emphasis on individual attention and personal growth.

The BOM recognises that child protection and welfare considerations permeate all aspects of school life and must be reflected in each school policy, school practices and activities. Accordingly, in accordance with the requirements of the DES, Children First Act 2015, the *Children First: National Guidance*, and Tusla's *Child Safeguarding: A Guide for Policy Procedure and Practice*, the BOM of Boyle Parochial School has approved this Child Safeguarding Statement.

The BOM has adopted and will fully implement, without modification, the recommendations made in the *Children First: National Guidance 2017* and the Children First Act 2015. These procedures will therefore underpin the content of this safeguarding statement.

The following key personnel have been identified and ratified by the BOM:

Designated Liaison Person (DLP) Ms. Mardette Lynch

Deputy Designated Liaison Person (DDL) Ms. Daphne Howard

In its policies, practices and activities, Boyle Parochial School will adhere to the following principles of best practice in Child Protection and Welfare. Our school recognises that the protection and welfare of children is of paramount importance, regardless of all other considerations and will therefore:

- 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
- Fully respect confidentiality requirements in dealing with child protection matters

Certain school policies e.g. Code of Behaviour / Anti-Bullying, will take particular account of this Child Safeguarding Statement. Specific policies named hereunder are key elements of this overall document and must be referred to in the context of this statement:

- Attendance
- Enrolment
- Code of Behaviour
- Anti-Bullying
- Health & Safety
- Record Keeping
- ICT
- Supervision
- Special Education
- Induction of staff
- Tours/Trips
- Critical Incidents

This statement is considered with reference to the participation by pupils in sporting activities, other extra-curricular activities and outings. Other practices and activities, where child protection might have particular relevance, will consider the risks and procedures outlined within this statement. The BOM have ensured that the necessary policies, protocols or practices, as appropriate, are in place in respect of each of the above listed items.

This statement is available to all school personnel and is on display in the school porch. It is available in hard copy in each classroom. A copy of this statement is available for the attention of the DES and the patron if requested.

This statement includes procedures for teachers should be followed when reporting an incident of concern. This statement is prepared and published in accordance with statutory obligations in relation to Child Safeguarding Statements. It will be reviewed bi-annually using relevant templates published by the DES or IPPN (Irish primary Principal's Network). Boyle Parochial School aims to be fully compliant with statutory requirements and as such, a Child Protection Oversight Report is provided to the BOM as part of the Principal's report at every BOM meeting.

Designated Liaison Person (DLP)

In Boyle Parochial School the Principal, Ms. Mardette Lynch, appointed by the BOM, is the DLP. Ms. Daphne Howard acts as Deputy DLP. Both teachers have undertaken training from the Child Abuse Prevention Programme and have attended Child Protection training.

The DLP has specific responsibility for Child Protection Procedures and will represent the school in all correspondence with HSE/Tusla, An Garda Síochána and other parties in connection with allegations of abuse. All matters pertaining to child abuse concerns should be processed through the DLP (DES Procedures 3:2).

Further information on the responsibilities of the DLP can be referred to on page 8 section 2.2 of Child Protection (DES 2001, pages 11-12)

The DLP acts appropriately where there are reasonable grounds for suspicion or where an allegation has been made.

CONFIDENTIALITY

All information regarding concerns of possible child abuse should only be shared on a 'need-to-know' basis in the interest of the child. The giving of information to those who may be deemed entitled to have that information is not a breach of confidentiality. This procedure exists for the protection of a child who may have been or has been abused. The DLP who is submitting a report to the HSE/Tusla or An Garda Síochána should inform Parent/Guardian, unless doing so is likely to endanger the child or place that child at further risk. A decision not to inform a parent/guardian should be briefly recorded together with the reasons for not doing so.

In emergency situations, where the HSE/Tusla cannot be contacted, and the child appears to be at immediate and serious risk, An Garda Síochána should be contacted immediately. A child should not be left in a dangerous situation pending HSE/Tusla intervention.

PROTECTIONS FOR PERSONS REPORTING ABUSE

The protections for persons reporting Child Abuse Act 1998 provides immunity from civil liability to any person who reports a child protection concern 'reasonably and in good faith' to designated officers of HSE/Tusla or any member of An Garda Síochána (DES Procedures 1:10).

CHILD PROTECTION PRACTICES

The staff and BOM of this school have identified the following as areas of specific concern in relation to Child Protection. Following discussion and consultation, the staff and BOM have agreed that the following practices be adopted:

- 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

Whilst physical contact may be used to comfort, reassure or assist a child, the following factors should determine its appropriateness:

1. The age and developmental stage of the child
 2. The contact is acceptable to the child
 3. The contact is open and not secretive
- School personnel should avoid doing anything of a personal nature for children that they can do for themselves.
 - School personnel should never engage in or allow:
 1. The use of inappropriate language or behaviours
 2. Physical punishment of any kind
 3. Sexually provocative games or suggestive comments about/to a child
 4. The use of sexually explicit or pornographic material

Section 2: Risk Assessment

We have carried out an assessment of any potential for harm to a child while availing of our services. Procedures for managing identified risks have been put in place.

CHILD ABUSE - DEFINITION AND RECOGNITION

Child Abuse can be categorised into four different types

- Neglect
- Emotional Abuse
- Physical Abuse
- Sexual Abuse

Each of these categories is defined in full in 'Children First' (Department of Children & Youth Affairs Chapter 2)

NEGLECT can be defined in terms of an omission, where the child suffers significant harm or impairment of development by being deprived of food, clothing, warmth, hygiene, intellectual stimulation, supervision and safety, attachment to and affection from adults, medical care.

GUIDELINES FOR RECOGNITION OF CHILD ABUSE

A list of child abuse indicators is contained in Children First, Chapter 2:2. This policy draws particular attention to 'persistent evidence' of neglect, including indicators such as no lunch, lack of uniform, no homework, poor attendance, persistent health problems, lack of sleep indicating inappropriate television viewing late at night and other evidence that would indicate lack of supervision in the home. Persistent tardiness at drop-off and pick-up time would constitute such evidence. All signs and symptoms must be examined in the total context of the child's situation and family circumstances.

ALLEGATIONS /SUSPICIONS IN RELATION TO SCHOOL EMPLOYEES

(DES Procedures Chapter 5)

The Chairperson and the DLP are concerned with the protection of the children in their care. However, employees must be protected against false and malicious claims. Legal advice should be sought by the BOM in relation to the employee. If the allegation is against the DLP, the BOM /chairperson will assume the responsibility for reporting the matter to the HSE/Tusla.

REPORTING

When an allegation of abuse is made against a school employee the DLP should act in accordance with the procedures outlined in 'Children First'. A written statement of the allegation should be sought from the person making the report. A parent/guardian may make a statement on behalf of a child. The DLP should always inform the Chairperson of the BoM. The DLP is responsible for liaising with the HSE/Tusla. The Chairperson assumes responsibility for dealing with the employee. School employees, other than the DLP, who receive allegations against another school employee, should immediately report the matter to the DLP. School employees who form suspicions regarding conduct of another school employee should consult with the DLP.

The Chairperson must take the necessary steps to protect the child and may consult with the BoM in this matter. The BoM may direct that the employee take administrative leave with pay. The DES should be immediately informed.

SCHOOL MEASURES TAKEN TO PROTECT THE CHILDREN IN OUR CARE

There are a number of areas where common sense in our school should prevail in order to protect the children in the school and the staff who care for them. In relation to this, certain points should be noted:

1. Boyle Parochial School shall fully implement the **Stay Safe** Programme.
2. A copy of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement, which includes the names of the DLP and Deputy DLP (DDL), will be made available to all school personnel and available to view by parents/guardians.
3. The name of the DLP and other relevant support services are displayed in the school porch.
4. In addition to informing the school authority of those cases where a report involving a child in the school has been submitted to the HSE/Tusla, the DLP shall also inform the school authority of cases where the DLP sought advice from the HSE/Tusla and as a result of this advice, no report was made. At each BoM meeting, the Child Protection **OVERSIGHT REPORT** will provide the information necessary for compliance with the relevant reporting requirements, particularly where the matter relates to a school employee.
5. Boyle Parochial School will undertake a bi-annual review of its Child Safeguarding Statement and its implementation by the school. We note that this is an organic document which will evolve over time, particularly with regard to the Risk Assessment.

THIS POLICY WAS RATIFIED BY THE BOARD OF MANAGEMENT ON JUNE 19TH 2019

SITUATION	BOYLE PAROCHIAL N.S. PRACTICE
ONE-TO-ONE TEACHING	Parent/Guardian consent sought Teaching in GLASS-WALLED Learning Support Room
SNA WORK	Under teacher direction in open classroom environment
VISITORS/GUEST SPEAKERS	Garda Vetted Credentials checked by Principal Never left alone with children
TOILETING/INTIMATE CARE NEEDS	Addressed under TOILETING/INTIMATE CARE Policy
TOILETING ACCIDENTS	Clean underwear/clothing kept in school office Parents/Guardians contacted Child assisted by staff member (familiar to child) if parent/guardian cannot be contacted
ACCIDENTS	Noted in INCIDENT BOOK Addressed under Health and Safety Policy
SWIMMING	Two adults in attendance at all times. Dressing rooms/pool area well supervised
CHANGING FOR GAMES/PE/SWIMMING	Pupils expected to dress/undress themselves. If assistance required, this will be done in communal area with consent of parents/guardians In exceptional cases the need to assist may arise
ATTENDANCE	School attendance monitored as per attendance policy Non-attendance monitored in correlation with signs of neglect/abuse
BEHAVIOUR	Children encouraged to play co-operatively Inappropriate behaviour addresses under CODE OF BEHAVIOUR Policy DLP notified if incident of a sexualised nature occurs
BULLYING	Bullying behaviour addressed under ANTI-BULLYING Policy DLP notified if behaviour is of a sexualised nature/is regarded as being particularly abusive
TRAVEL	Staff members will not carry children alone in cars Children must wear safety belts when travelling by bus and conduct themselves appropriately at all times on bus trips
COMMUNICATION	Every effort made to enhance pupil-teacher communication. Pupils listened to sympathetically SPHE/RE Programme allow for open pupil-teacher communication
STAFF INDUCTION	DLP responsible for informing all new teachers and ancillary staff of Child Safeguarding Statement / Child Protection Procedures / 'Children First' Guidelines / 'Children First' - National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children (2011) All teachers teach appropriate SPHE objectives for their class
PUPIL INDUCTION	Parents/Guardians made aware of attendance rules Parents/Guardians informed of programmes dealing with personal development e.g. RSE, Stay Safe All new parents/guardians given Admissions Pack
INTERNET SAFETY	Addressed in ACCEPTABLE USE Policy Media products checked for appropriateness regarding age/suitability

RECORD KEEPING	<p>Records of each child's progress in individual School Record/Report Book, kept in locked filing cabinet in office</p> <p>Roll book updated daily</p> <p>Leabhar Tinrimh recorded online - printed off and signed at end of calendar month</p> <p>Sensitive information regarding children shared on a need-to-know basis</p> <p>Files of pupils who no longer attend school kept in separate filing cabinet</p>
SUPERVISION	<p>Supervision Rota followed by staff to ensure comprehensive supervision of children at all breaks</p> <p>Agreed rules and procedures addressed in SUPERVISION Policy</p>
VISIBILITY	<p>Children must be visible on the playground</p> <p>Children must not loiter in classrooms/toilets (No adult supervision)</p> <p>Children must not leave playground or engage with adults who are outside of the playground</p>