

Child Protection Policy of Our Lady of Lourdes School

The Board of Management recognizes 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 **Our Lady of Lourdes School** 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 **Mrs. Sheila Gallagher**
3. The Deputy Designated Liaison Person (Deputy DLP) is **Ms. Breda Kennedy**
4. In its policies, practices and activities, Our Lady of Lourdes School 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. Schools Code of Behaviour, Anti-Bullying Policy, Visitors/Volunteers Policy have all been drawn up in line with our Child Protection Policy.
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
7. 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 _____.

Signed: _____
Chairperson of Board of Management

Signed: _____
Principal

Date: _____

Date: _____

Date of next review: _____

Best Practice:

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 practices be adapted.

(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 development 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 the pupils. The school (principal / teachers) has a responsibility to check out the credentials of the visitor / guest speaker to ensure that the material in use by the guest 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 the 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. The staff to be involved in this care will be identified and provision will be made for occasions when the particular staff involved are absent. A written copy of what has been agreed will be made and kept in the child's file. Two members of staff will be present when dealing 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:

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. If the pupil for whatever reason cannot clean or change themselves and the parents / guardians cannot be contacted the child will be assisted by members of staff familiar to the

child. In all such situations two members of staff should be present. A record of 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, e.g. all Learning Support / Resource rooms will have a window in the door. Parents of children who are to be involved in one-to-one teaching will be informed and their 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 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 be allowed to dress / undress a child in a cubicle / private are. In such situations where privacy is required the parent / guardian of the child will be asked to assist the child. Pupils will be supervised, while going swimming in the changing rooms. Given the ratio of female to male teachers on our staff, it will be necessary for female teacher / SNAs to supervise in the boys changing room as well as the girls. Teacher / SNAs will always supervise in pairs.

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