



Child Protection Policy

This document is formulated in response to recent changes in Guidance and Procedures in relation to Child Protection matters and takes account of the provisions of each of the following important pieces of legislation:

- Freedom of Information Act 1997
- The Education Act 1998
- The Child Welfare Act 2000
- Children First – National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2011.

The new procedures are based on the recently published *Children First – National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2011*.

References

- **'Children First'** (Department of Children and Youth Affairs 2011)
- **'Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools'** (Department of Education and Skills 2011)

Aims of Policy

The aims of the Child Protection Policy are to:

- Put in place clear procedures for dealing with and reporting suspected/alleged cases of child neglect or abuse
- Endeavour to safeguard the well being of the child and intervene when necessary to protect their rights
- Help school personnel recognise the signs of neglect or abuse
- Provide a safe environment for our school community

The Board of Management of Cullina National School 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 Department of Education and Skills, Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools, the BoM of Cullina National School has approved this Child Protection Policy.

The BoM has adopted and will fully implement without modification the Department of Education and Skills Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2011. These procedures will therefore underpin the content of this policy.

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

The Designated Liaison Person (DLP) is Mrs Moira Cronin, Principal.

The Deputy Designated Liaison Person (Deputy DLP) is Mrs Marie Murphy, Deputy Principal.

In its policies, practices and activities, Cullina National 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
- Adhere to the above principles in relation to any adult pupil with a special vulnerability

Specific policies named hereunder are key elements of this overall document and must be referred to in the context of this policy:

- Attendance
- Enrolment
- Code of Behaviour
- Bullying
- Health & Safety
- ICT
- Supervision
- Special Ed
- Critical Incidents

This policy will also be considered with reference to the participation by pupils in sporting activities, other extra-curricular activities and school outings. Other practices and activities, where child protection might have particular relevance, will consider the procedures

outlined within this policy. 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.

This policy is available to all school personnel and the Parent Association and is readily accessible to parents on request. It is also available in hard copy in each classroom. A copy of this policy is available for the attention of the DES and the patron if requested.

Designated Liaison Person (DLP)

In Cullina National School, Mrs Moira Cronin the Principal, appointed by the BoM, is the DLP. Mrs Marie Murphy acts as Deputy DLP. Both teachers will undertake training from the Child Abuse Prevention Programme at the earliest opportunity. **CAPP** provides training to the whole school community (staff, parents and Boards of Management) on the stay Safe Programme.

The DLP has specific responsibility for Child Protection Procedures and will represent the school in all correspondence with Health Boards, An Garda Siochana 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)

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 interests of the child. The giving of information to those who need 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 Health Board or An Garda Siochána should inform a 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 Health Board cannot be contacted, and the child appears to be at immediate and serious risk, An Garda Siochána should be contacted. A child should not be left in a dangerous situation where Health Board intervention is not forthcoming.

Protection for Persons Reporting Child Abuse

The protection 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 Health Boards or any member of an Garda Síochána (DES Procedures 1:10)

Qualified Privilege

People making a report to the DLP in good faith have 'qualified privilege' under common law. Reports made to Health Boards may be subject to provisions of the Freedom of Information Act, 1997. This act enables members of the public to obtain access to personal information relating to them which is in the possession of public bodies. However, the act also provides that public bodies may refuse access to information obtained by them in confidence (DES Procedures 1:11)

Definition and Recognition of Child Abuse

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**' (Dept. 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.

Emotional Abuse is normally to be found in the relationship between a caregiver and a child rather than in specific events or patterns of events. It occurs when a child's needs for affection, approval, consistency and security are not met. Unless other forms of abuse are present, it is rarely manifested in terms of physical signs or symptoms (3.3 Children First).

Sexual Abuse occurs when a child is used by another person for his/her gratification or sexual arousal (3.5 Children First)

(More details of each type of abuse is contained in Appendix 1. P.125, Children First)

Guidelines for Recognition of Child Abuse

A list of child neglect indicators is contained in Chapter 2:2 of Children First. 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. All signs and symptoms must be examined in the total context of the child's situation and family circumstances.

There are commonly three stages in the identification of child abuse:

- 1. Considering the possibility** – if a child appears to have suffered an inexplicable and suspicious injury, seems distressed without obvious reason, display usual behaviour problems or appears fearful in the company of parents/carers
- 2. Looking out for signs of abuse** – a cluster of pattern of signs is the most reliable indicator of abuse. Children may make direct or indirect disclosures, which should always be taken seriously. Less obvious disclosures may be gently explored with a child, without direct questioning (which may be more usefully be carried by the Health Board or Garda). Play situations such as drawing or story telling may reveal significant information which could be considered in relation to the child's social and family context, and it is important to always be open to alternative explanations.
- 3. Recording of Information** – it is important to establish the grounds for concern, by obtaining as much information as possible. Observations should be recorded and should include dates, times, names, locations context and any information which could be considered relevant or which might facilitate further assessment/investigation.

Each of these stages is developed in 'Children First' (2:2)

Handling Disclosures from Children

(2.4 DES Child Protection Guidelines and Procedures)

An abused child is likely to be under severe emotional stress and staff members may be the only adult whom the child is prepared to trust. Great care should be taken not to damage that trust.

When information is offered in confidence, the member of staff will need tact and sensitivity in responding to the disclosure. The member of staff will need to reassure the child and retain his/her trust while explaining the need for action and the possible consequence, which will necessarily involve other adults being informed. It is important to tell the child that everything possible will be done to protect and support him/her, but not to make promises that cannot be kept e.g. promising not to tell anyone else. While the basis for concern must be established as comprehensively as possible, the following advice is offered to school personnel to whom a child makes a disclosure of abuse.

- Listen to the child
- Do not ask leading questions nor make suggestions to the child
- Offer reassurance but do not make promises
- Do not stop a child recalling significant events
- Do not react
- Explain that further help may have to be sought
- Record the discussion accurately and retain the record. (see staff reporting form)
This written information (pink reporting form) should be given to and retained by the DLP

Designated Liaison Persons (DLP) (2.2 DES Child Protection Guidelines and Procedures)

All Boards of Management must designate a senior member of staff to have specific responsibility for child protection. This person will be the Designated Liaison Person for the school in dealing with Health Boards, Garda Síochána and other parties in connection with allegations of abuse. Those other parties should be advised that they should conduct all matters pertaining to the processing or investigations of alleged child abuse through the Designated Liaison Person, Mrs Moira Cronin. (DLP)

Where the Designated Liaison Person is unavailable for whatever reason, arrangements should be in place for another nominated member of staff to assume his/her responsibility. i.e. the Deputy Designated Liaison Person.

Mrs Moira Cronin, will act as the DLP following ratification by the Board of Management. Mrs Marie Murphy will act as the Deputy Liaison Person following ratification by the Board of Management. The DLP has specific responsibility for child protection and will represent

the school in all dealings with Health Boards, Gard Siochana and other parties, in connection with allegations of abuse.

Action To Be Taken By The Designated Liaison Person (3.2 DES Child protection Guidelines and Procedures) The DLP

If the school employee and the Designated Liaison Person are satisfied that there are reasonable grounds for the suspicion or allegation the DLP should report the matter to the relevant Health Board immediately. It may be useful to note:

1. A report should be made to the Health Board in person by phone and writing. Each Health Board has a social worker who is available during certain hours to meet with, or talk on the telephone, to persons wishing to report child protection concerns.
2. It is generally most helpful if persons wishing to report child abuse concerns make personal contact with the duty social worker. This will facilitate the social worker in gathering as much information as possible about the child and his parent/carers.
3. In the event of an emergency, or the non-availability of health board staff, the report should be made to the Garda. This may be done at any Garda Station.

It is recommended that all reports should include as much as possible of the information sought in the Standard Reporting Form. Since all information requested may not be available to the person making the report, the form should be completed as comprehensively as possible. **When such a report is being made to the Health Board, the Chairperson of the Board of Management should be informed.**

In the case where the school personnel have concern about a child, but are not sure whether to report the matter to the appropriate health board, they should seek appropriate advice. To do so, the DLP should consult the appropriate health board staff. In consulting the appropriate health board staff, the DLP would have to give identifying details as are required when a report is being made. If the health board advises that a referral should be made, the DLP should act on that advice.

In following the discussion outlined, the DLP decides that the concerns of the school employee should not be referred to the relevant Health Board, the School employee should be given a clear statement, in writing, as to the reason why the action is not being taken. The school employee should be advised that, if he/she remains concerned about the situation, he/she is free to consult with or report to the health. Again, the standard reporting form (see template) of these guidelines should be used. Any such report would be covered by the **Protection for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act, 1998.**

Confidentiality (1.2 DES Child Protection Guidelines and Procedures)

All information regarding concerns of possible child abuse should be only shared on a need to know basis, in the interest of the child. The test is whether or not the person has any legitimate involvement or role in dealing with the issue.

Giving information to those who need to have that information for the protection of the child who may have been or has been abuse, is not a breach of confidentiality.

The DLP who is submitting a report to the Health Board or Garda Síochána should inform a 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 reason for not doing so.

In emergency situations, where the Health Board cannot be contacted the child appears at immediate and serious risk, an Garda Síochána should be contacted immediately.

Under no circumstances should a child be left in a dangerous situation pending Health Board intervention.

Allegations or 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 in the first instance. However, employees must be protected against false and malicious claims. Due process must be observed in relation to allegations against employees. Legal Advice should be sought by the BoM in relation to an allegation in relation to an employee. If the allegation is against the DLP, the BoM Chairperson will assume the responsibility for reporting the matter to the Health Board.

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/agency 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 and is responsible for liaising with the HSE. 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 employee should be informed by the Chairperson (Employer) that:

- a) An allegation has been made against him/her
- b) The nature of the allegation
- c) Whether or not the Health Board or Gardaí has been informed.

The employee should be given a copy of the written allegation and any other relevant documentation. The employee should be requested to respond to the allegation in writing to the BoM within a specified period and told that this may be passed to the Gardaí, Health Board and legal advisers.

The Chairperson must take the necessary steps to protect the child and may consult the BoM in this matter. The BoM may direct that the employee take administrative leave with pay and avoid suspension, thus removing any implication of guilt. The DES should be immediately informed.

Protection for Persons Reporting Child Abuse

(1.3 DES Child Protection Guidelines and Procedures: 2.4 Children First)

The protection for persons Reporting Child Abuse Act 1998, provides immunity from civil liability to any person who reports suspicions of child abuse reasonably and in good faith to designated officers of Health Boards, or any member of an Garda Síochána. This means that even if a reported suspicion of child abuse proves unfounded, a plaintiff who took an action would have to prove that the reporter had not acted reasonably and in good faith making the report.

The Act provides significant protection for employees who report child abuse. These protections cover all employees and all forms of discrimination up to and including dismissal.

The Protection for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act, 1998 came into operation on 23rd January 1999. Its main provisions are:

1. The provision of immunity from civil liability to any person who reports child abuse **reasonably and in good faith** to designated officers of Health Board or any member of the Garda Síochána.
2. The provision of significant protections for employees who report child abuse. These protections cover all employees and all forms of discrimination up to and including dismissal.
3. The creation of a new offence of false reporting of child abuse where a person makes a report of child abuse to the appropriate authorities **knowing that**

statement to be false. This is a new criminal offence designed to protect innocent persons from malicious reports

Qualified Privilege (1.4. DES Child Protection Guidelines and Procedures)

While the legal protection outlined above only applies to reports made to the appropriate authorities (i.e. Health Boards and an Garda Siochana), Common Law qualified privilege continues to apply as heretofore. Consequently, should a Board of Management member or school personnel furnish information with regard to suspicions of child abuse in the DLP or school personnel furnish information with regard to suspicions of child abuse to the DLP or Chairperson of the Board of Management, such communication would be regarded under common law as having qualified privilege.

Qualified privilege arises where the person making the communication has a duty to do so, or a right, or interest to protect the child and where the communication is made to a person with a similar duty, right or interest. The person making the report, acting in loco parentis, would be expected to act in the child's best interests and in making the report would be regarded as acting in such a manner. Privilege can be displaced only where it can be established that the person making the report acted maliciously.

Furthermore, those reporting a child's disclosure are not regarded as making an allegation as a matter of charge, but simply carrying out of their duty in good faith. They are not accusing or bringing a charge.

Freedom of Information Act 1997

1. DES Guidelines
2. Children First

Reports made to Health Boards may be subject to provisions of Freedom of Information Act 1997, which enables members of public to obtain access to personal information relating to them which is in the possession of public bodies. However, the Act also provides that public bodies may refuse access to information obtained by them in confidence.

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. Cullina National School shall fully implement the Stay Safe programme
 2. A copy of the school's child protection policy, which includes the names of the Designated Liaison Person (DLP) and Deputy DLP, will be made available to all school personnel and the Parents' Association and is readily accessible to parents on request
 3. The name of the DLP and other relevant support services are displayed in a prominent position near the main entrance to the school
 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, the DLP shall also inform the school authority of cases where the DLP sought advice from the HSE and as a result of this advice, no report was made. At each BoM meeting, the Principal's Report shall include the number of all such cases and this shall be recorded in the minutes of the BOM meeting.
 5. Cullina National School will undertake an annual review of its Child Protection Policy and its implementation by the school. A checklist, to be used in undertaking the review (included at **Appendix 1**). The school has 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 Association. A record of the review and its outcome shall be made available, if requested, to the patron and the DES.
- Staff who take classes swimming should make sure that there are two adults in attendance at all times. The dressing rooms and pool area should be well supervised
 - Staff should make every effort not be alone in a classroom with one child or detain a child on their own after school. In the case of special needs pupils where resource hours and assistance are sanctioned on an individual basis, it is school policy that staff in such a situation should work with the classroom door open, thus rendering the occupants visible at all times.
 - When possible children should work in groups
 - Children with physical disabilities who may require assistance in toileting will be aided by a Special Needs Assistant who has met the necessary screening requirements when being employed by the school.

It should be noted that children with disabilities may be more at risk of abuse due to a number of reasons (DES Procedures 2:3). Parents, teachers and all staff involved in services for children with disabilities need to be familiar with the indicators of abuse and to be alert for signs of abuse.

Staff Training

Staff development and in service. The DLP will inform staff of current practices and relevant in service training courses; staff in – service in school on related topics.

Existing School Policies

The following school policies which compliment the Child Protection Policy are already in place in the school:

- Substance Misuse Policy
- Code of Behaviour and Anti Bullying Policy
- Health & Safety Statement
- Mission Statement
- Healthy Lunch Policy

Ratification of Policy

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 [Insert Date]

Signed: *Griffith J Griffiths*
Chairperson of Board of Management

Signed: *Maire Bn. Uí Chroínín*
Principal

Date: **12th June 2012**

Date: **12th June 2012**

Date of next review: Annually

The Board further endorses the Principal, **Mrs Moira Cronin** as the school DLP and **Mrs Marie Murphy** as Deputy DLP.

On behalf of the Board of Management:

Griffith J Griffiths

(Chairperson) Date: *12th June 2012*

APPENDIX A

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

While physical contact may be used to comfort, reassure or assist a child, the following should be factors in 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.

School personnel should never engage in or allow:

- The use of inappropriate language or behaviours
- Physical punishment of any kind
- Sexually provocative games or suggestive comments about or to a child
- The use of sexually explicit or pornographic material

All media products (CDs, DVDs etc.) should be checked for their appropriateness with regard to age and suitability.

Visitors/Guest Speakers

Appropriately appointed and screened visiting teachers of varying disciplines, engaged by the BoM of [Insert School Name] to perform specific duties, will be left work with a class alone at the Principal's discretion

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 is appropriate.

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
- 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.

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 all such incidents will be kept and Principal and parents will be notified.

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.

On-to-one teaching

- It is the policy in this school that one-to-one teaching can sometimes be 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 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.

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 area and with the consent of parents. Under no circumstances will members of staff/volunteers be expected to or allowed to dress/undress a child unsupervised in a cubicle/private area. In such situations where privacy is required, the parents/guardians of the child will be asked to assist the child. [Insert School Name] will endeavour to have two male volunteers/member of staff in the male changing area and two female members of staff/volunteers in the female changing area.

The BoM of [Insert School Name] has requested that all swimming volunteers apply to be vetted. In the interim, a Volunteer Form approved by the CPSMA will be in use. 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 the Principal and parents.

Attendance

Our school attendance will be monitored as per our attendance policy. With regards to child protection, we will pay particular attention to trends in non-attendance. We will also monitor non-attendance in correlation with signs of neglect/physical/emotional abuse.

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.

Children travelling in staff cars

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

Communication

Every effort will be made to enhance pupil-teacher communication. 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. If teachers have to communicate with pupils on a one-to-one basis, they are requested to leave the classroom door open or request a colleague to attend. Further details on communications are found in the school's Communication Policy.

Induction of Staff

The DLP will be responsible for informing all new teachers and ancillary staff of the Child Protection Procedures (DES, 2011) and Children First Guidelines (2011), but particularly the recently published Children First – National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children (2011). All new teachers are expected to teach the appropriate SPHE objectives for their class. A member of staff, once trained, will be responsible for the mentoring of new teachers and will be responsible for supporting new teachers as they implement the SPHE objectives.

Induction of Pupils

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, Stay Safe and SPHE. All new parents will be given a copy of the school's enrolment policy, which outlines the procedures parents and children should use when contacting the school if there are absences or concerns of an educational/personal/family matter. Parents 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 Code of Behaviour and Anti-Bullying policies.

Internet Safety

It is the intention of the Principal and Staff at [Insert School Name] to ensure that child protection concerns will be addressed in the school's Acceptable Use Policy as part of its Information and Communication Technology policy. The Stay Safe lessons in each classroom may be supplemented with appropriate resources. There will also be annual meetings during which parents will be invited to attend a session with an invited speaker to stay abreast of the ever-changing situation regarding internet access.

Record Keeping

Teachers will keep records on each child's reports using [Insert School Name] Record Keeping Sheets. These records are kept in the drawer of each teacher's desk. 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 office. Further details on record keeping will be found in the school's Record Keeping Policy.

Supervision

The school's supervision policy will be followed by all staff to ensure that there is comprehensive supervision of children at all breaks. A rota will be displayed to cover 11 o'clock and lunchtime breaks. See Supervision Policy for agreed rules around break-times and procedures around teacher absences.

Visibility

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

Scoil An Chuileannaigh

Beaufort Co Kerry

Telephone: 064 6644788

e-mail: cullinaschool@yahoo.com

Web: www.cullinational.school.ie



Appendix C

Dear Parents/Guardians,

In recent years, as a society, we have become very aware of the problem of child abuse through neglect, emotional, physical or sexual abuse.

Each one of us has a duty to protect children and Children First, the National Guidelines, for the Protection and Welfare of Children noted that teachers, who are the main care givers to children outside the family, are particularly well placed to observe and monitor children for signs of abuse.

In response to this, the Department of Education and Skills published procedures for all schools in relation to child protection and welfare. These guidelines promote the safety and welfare of all children and are to be welcomed.

The Board of Management of [Insert School Name] has adopted these guidelines as school policy. Consequently, if school staff suspect or are alerted to possible child abuse, they are obliged to refer this matter to the Health Service Executive (HSE). The HSE will then assess the situation and provide support for the child concerned.

Children First, the National Guidelines for the Protection of Children may be assessed on the website of the Department of Children and Youth Affairs. (www.dcyu.ie) and the Department of Education and Skills Child Protection Procedures can be read on the Department's website (www.education.ie). Parents/Guardians are also welcome to look through the guidelines here at the school.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Maira Cronin

Principal

Child Protection Contacts

Designated Liaison Person

Mrs Moira Cronin

Principal

Deputy DLP

Mrs Marie Murphy

Deputy Principal

Garda Station

Killarney Garda Station Telephone: 0646631222

Local Contact For

'The Children and Family Social Services of the HSE'

TELEPHONE: 0667121566

Address: Denny Street Tralee

Child Protection Guidelines Checklist for School Employees

Designated Liaison Person: **Moira Cronin (Principal)**

Deputy Designated Liaison Person: **Marie Murphy (Deputy Principal)**

If a child discloses information to you:-

- Listen
- Do not ask leading questions
- Offer reassurance but do not promise not to tell
- Explain that other adults may need to be told - DLP
- Do not stop the child speaking
- Do not over react or comment
- Inform DLP - If you have a reasonable suspicion or reasonable grounds for concern that a child is at risk or has suffered abuse, the DLP should contact the Health Board for advice
- At the earliest opportunity, record accurately what the child has said – Using the child's own words. Record date/time and context of the disclosure. Use child's registration number – Not child's name
- Facts only
- Sketch signs of physical injury if appropriate
- Retain records for a period of 21 years in keeping with the school's Record Keeping Policy

The following should also be reported to the DLP:

- An account from a person who saw a child being abused
- Injury consistent with abuse
- Dysfunctional behaviour
- Implausible explanations for injury or behaviour
- Consistent evidence over a period of time that a child is being emotionally or physically neglected

Health Board Response:

- School is asked to monitor the situation
- Formal report is requested , sent by DLP and on receipt case is allocated to Social Worker
- Preliminary enquiry – Screening process
- Initial assessment

Possible outcomes:

- Case closed
- Family support
- Child Protection Plan (usually following a case conference)

Appendix 1: 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. The BoM may wish to include other items in the checklist that are of particular relevance to Cullina National School and reserves the right to do so if/when the need occurs.

1.	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
2.	Has the Board formally adopted a child protection policy in accordance with the 'Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools'?	YES	NO
3.	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
4.	Are there both a DLP and a Deputy DLP currently appointed?	YES	NO
5.	Are the relevant contact details (HSE and An Garda Síochána) to hand?	YES	NO
6.	Has the DLP attended available child protection training?	YES	NO
7.	Has the Deputy DLP attended available child protection training?	YES	NO
8.	Have any members of the Board attended child protection training?	YES	NO
9.	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
10.	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
11.	Does the Board have arrangements in place to communicate the school's child protection policy to new school personnel?	YES	NO
12.	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
13.	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
14.	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
15.	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
16.	Were child protection matters reported to the Board appropriately recorded in the Board minutes?	YES	NO
		Not Applicable	
17.	Is the Board satisfied that all records relating to child protection are appropriately filed and stored securely?	YES	NO
18.	Has the Board ensured that the Parents' Association has been provided with the school's child protection policy?	YES	NO

19.	Has the Board ensured that the school's child protection policy is available to parents on request?	Yes	No
20.	Has the Board ensured that the Stay Safe programme is implemented in full in the school? (applies to primary schools)	Yes	
21.	Has the Board ensured that the SPHE curriculum is implemented in full in the school?	Yes	No
22.	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
23.	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
24.	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
25.	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
26.	Has the Board identified any aspects of the school's child protection policy and/or its implementation that require further improvement?	Yes	No
27.	Has the Board put in place an action plan containing appropriate timelines to address those aspects of the school's child protection policy and/or its implementation that have been identified as requiring further improvement	Yes	No

Ratification of Annual Review of Policy

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 [Insert Date]

Signed: *Griffith J Griffiths*
Chairperson of Board of Management

Signed: *Maire Bn. Uí Chroínín*
Principal

Date: **27th January 2015**

Date: **27th January 2015**

Date of next review: Annually

The Board further endorses the Principal, **Mrs Moira Cronin** as the school DLP and **Mrs Marie Murphy** as Deputy DLP.

On behalf of the Board of Management:

Griffith J Griffiths

(Chairperson) Date: *27th January 2015*

Child Protection Policy (Summary) of Cullina National School

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 Cullina National 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 **Máire Bn Uí Chroinín**
3. The Deputy Designated Liaison Person (Deputy DLP) is **Marie Murphy**
4. In its policies, practices and activities, Cullina National 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. This section of the child protection policy should be used to list school policies, practices and activities that are particularly relevant to child protection (e.g. the Code of Behaviour/Anti-bullying Policy, Pupil Attendance Strategy, Supervision of Pupils, School Outings

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.

6. This policy has been made available to school personnel and the Parents' Association 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 once in every school year.

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on 27th January 2015

Signed: *Griffith J Griffiths*
Chairperson of Board of Management

Signed: *Máire Bn. Uí Chroinín*
Principal

Date: *27th January 2015*

Date: *27th January 2015*

Date of next review: **Annually**