

Gaelscoil an tSeanchaí



POLASÁÍ COSAINT PÁISTÍ

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

2018

Reviewed by:

Designated Teacher for Child Protection:

Date:.....

Deputy Designated Teacher for Child Protection:

Date:.....

Designated Teacher for Child Protection in the Naíscoil:

Date:.....

Principal:

Date:.....

Chair of the Board of Governors:.....

Date:.....

Designated Governor for Child Protection:

Date:.....

This policy should be read alongside our other safeguarding policies, which are set out in the Appendix.

Our Mission Statement

Here in Magherafelt lives a growing and committed Irish speaking community. Gaelscoil an tSeanchaí is at the heart of this community. Our task is to provide high standard education through the medium of Irish. We recognise the potential of the individual and every child flourishes under our care. We attend to the physical, spiritual and emotional needs of the child. Promotion of confidence is central to every aspect of our work.

'Mol an óige agus tiocfaidh sí'

Praise the young and they will progress

Our school is a community. We work together: teachers, principal, governors and everyone who works in the school. We recognise the important role that parents play in their children's education. The native language and culture of our country is very important to us. We celebrate and promote both our language and culture. We promote our own identity.

We all learn from each other. When the children come of age they are worthy members of the community, appropriately equipped with the relevant skills for dealing with life. We do our utmost to help children become independent learners. We recognise that we are all learners. The teaching staff broadens their own professional experience and development on an ongoing basis.

We work in a safe, secure and happy environment. Children are happy and safe from danger and we listen to each individual. We emphasise the importance of good manners and behaviour in school. We respect everyone in the school and show respect to them. We celebrate diversity. All effort and success achieved both within and outside school is important to us. We celebrate accordingly.

The health and safety of our children is paramount. Therefore, parents and visitors must always report to the school office on arrival. No parent or visitor is permitted into the teaching area without permission. Should

parents wish to speak to a class teacher they must make an appointment through the office.

Child Protection Statement

- The governors and staff of *Gaelscoil an tSeanchaí* fully recognise the contribution it makes to safeguarding children. We recognise that all staff, including volunteers, have a full and active part in protecting our pupils from harm. We recognise the school's responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children is of paramount importance.

All staff and Governors believe that our school should provide a caring, positive, safe and stimulating environment which promotes the social, physical and emotional development of the individual child.

This policy is informed by the guidance and procedures set out by DE 'Pastoral Care in Schools: Child Protection 1999', the 'Area Child Protection Committees' (ACPC) Regional Policy and Procedures 2005' and the amendments to the 'ACPC policy and Guidelines 2008'. We have consulted with pupils, parents, teachers and our school governors in the revision of this policy.

The central thrust of The Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995 is that the welfare of the child must be the paramount consideration in all decisions concerning the child. This is also reflected in Article 3 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child - the best interests of the child shall be of primary consideration. The principle that states the paramount position of the welfare of the child underpins our Child Protection policy and procedures.

Our policy applies to all staff, governors and volunteers working in the school and is consistent with those of the Safeguarding Board for NI (SBNI). The purpose of the procedures set out in this policy is to safeguard and protect our pupils by ensuring that every adult who works in our school - teachers, non-teaching staff and volunteers - has clear guidance on the action which is required where abuse or neglect of a child is suspected. We are alert to the signs of abuse and neglect and follow our procedures to ensure that children

receive effective support, protection and justice. The issue of child abuse will not be ignored by anyone who works in our school and we know that some forms of child abuse are also a criminal offence. We also recognise that domestic violence may be a cause of a range of physical, emotional and behavioural difficulties for children.

This policy is available on the school website and will be reviewed at least annually, unless an incident or new legislation or guidance suggests the need for an interim review.

Policy Aims

1. To establish a safe environment in which children can learn and develop.
We recognise that safer children make more successful learners;
2. To ensure all children, regardless of age, gender, ability, culture, race, language, religion or sexual identity, have equal rights to protection
3. To provide all staff with the necessary information, training and support to enable them to meet their child protection responsibilities;
4. To demonstrate the school's commitment with regard to child protection to pupils, parents and other partners.
5. To develop and implement procedures for identifying and reporting child protection issues and cases, or suspected cases, of abuse;
6. To ensure we practise safe recruitment by checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with children;
7. To raise awareness of child protection issues and equipping children with the skills needed to keep them safe;
8. To ensure pupils involved in child protection issues will receive

appropriate support in accordance with the Child Protection Plan for than child. Staff involved in child protection issues will also receive appropriate support.

9. To ensure consistent good practice in all issues relating to child protection.

Terminology

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children refers to the process of protecting children from maltreatment, preventing the impairment of health or development, ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care and taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Child protection refers to the processes undertaken to protect children who have been identified as suffering, or being at risk of suffering significant harm.

Staff refers to all those working for or on behalf of the school, full time or part time, temporary or permanent in either a paid or voluntary capacity.

DT refers to the designated teacher for child protection

Child includes everyone under the age of 18.

Parent refers to birth parents and other adults who are in a parenting role, for example step-parents, foster carers and adoptive parents.

Roles and responsibilities

The Safeguarding Team

- The Principal is **DEIRDRE NIC SUIBHNE (CHAIR)**.
- The designated teacher (DT) for child protection is **ORLAGH UÍ DHEORÁIN**
- The deputy designated teacher is **RACHAEL NIG UIGINN**.
- The Designated Teacher for Child Protection in the Naíscoil is **FIONNUALA NI DHUIFINN**.
- The designated child protection governor is **EIMEAR O'KANE**.

The Safeguarding Team can be contacted on the school's telephone number:

028 79300532

All Adults

It is the responsibility of **ALL** adults working in the school to record and report possible or disclosed abuse to the Designated Teacher. It is the responsibility of all adults to:

- Adopt safeguarding guidelines including the Code of Behaviour for staff;
- Act upon any concern, no matter how small it may seem, in accordance with the school's procedures;
- Promote safe practice and challenge poor and unsafe behavior;
- Ensure all health and safety procedures are adhered to;
- Ensure they are aware of safeguarding procedures and are appropriately trained.

The Chair of the Board of Governors

The Chair of the Board of Governors must:

- Ensure that a safeguarding ethos is maintained within the school environment;
- Ensure that the school has a current Safeguarding and Child Protection policy in place and that staff implement the policy;
- Ensure that appropriate Governors undertake appropriate Child Protection and recruitment & selection training;
- Assume lead responsibility for managing any complaint or allegation against the School Principal.

The Designated Governor for Child Protection

The Designated Governor will provide the lead in keeping the governors informed of:

- The role of the Designated Teachers;
- The content of the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy;
- The content of a Code of Conduct for all adults within the school;
- The content of the termly updates and full Annual Designated Teachers Report;
- Recruitment, selection and vetting of staff.

The Principal

The role of the Principal is to ensure that:

- A designated teacher and deputy are appointed;
- This policy is adopted and followed in the school;
- The Chairperson of the Board of Governors (and the Board of Governors) is kept informed when appropriate;
- The school's Safeguarding and Child Protection policy is reviewed annually;
- Confidentiality is paramount and information should be passed to the Board of Governors only on a need to know basis;
- The Principal takes the lead in managing Safeguarding and Child Protection concerns relating to adults in the school.

The Designated Teacher for Child Protection

The role of the Designated teacher includes:

- Providing initial induction to all student teachers (before they meet pupils), and delivering training, annually, to all school staff including support staff on the Safeguarding and Child Protection policy;
- Ensures the he/she has a working knowledge of SBNI procedures;
- Being available to discuss the Child Protection concerns of any member of staff and offer advice about those concerns;
- Taking responsibility for managing and keeping all Child Protection concerns;
- Making referrals to Social Services or PSNI Public Protection Units when appropriate;
- Developing effective links with relevant agencies and co-operating as required with their enquiries regarding Child Protection matters including attendance at Case Conferences;
- Liaising with the Designated Officers for Child Protection at the BELB;
- Keeping the school Principal informed of any CP issues;
- Ensuring that the child protection policy and procedures are reviewed and updated annually and liaises with the nominated governor and Principal as appropriate;
- Ensuring that parents receive a copy of the Child Protection policy every 2 years which alerts them to the fact that referrals may be made and informs them of the role of the school in making referrals;

- Promotion of a Child Protection ethos in the school;
- Submitting a written, annual report to the Board of Governors regarding Child Protection;
- Maintaining all records pertaining to Child Protection in a secure location (accessed only by Principal, DT and DDT);
- Maintaining detailed written records of all concerns, ensuring that such records are stored securely and flagged on, but kept separate from, the pupil's general file;
- Where a pupil on the Child Protection register changes school, the DT ensures that the Designated Teacher in the receiving school is informed of the child's circumstances and of who the Social Worker is;
- Ensuring that when a child on the Child Protection register has missed 2 consecutive days from school, that the child's social worker is informed of the situation (following regionally agreed protocols).
- Making the child protection policy available publicly, on the school's website or by other means.

The deputy designated teacher:

Is trained to the same level as the DT and, in the absence of the DT, carries out those functions necessary to ensure the ongoing safety and protection of pupils. In the event of the long-term absence of the DT, the deputy will assume all of the functions above. Best practice now sees the DT and DDT acting as a team.

The Designated Teacher in the Naíscoil

Issues or worries concerning any child in Naíscoil an tSeanchaí should be brought to the attention of the Naíscoil teacher, who will in turn defer to the Designated Teacher.

Site security

Visitors to the school, including contractors, are asked to sign in and are given a badge, which confirms they have permission to be on site. Parents who are simply delivering or collecting their children do not need to sign in. All visitors are expected to observe the school's safeguarding and health and safety regulations. The principal will exercise professional judgement in determining whether any visitor should be escorted or supervised while on site.

Extended school and off-site arrangements

All extended and off site activities are subject to a risk assessment to satisfy health and safety and safeguarding requirements. Where extended school activities are provided by and managed by the school, our own child protection policy and procedures apply. If other organisations provide services or activities on our site on behalf of our school we will check that they have appropriate procedures in place, including safer recruitment procedures.

When our pupils attend off-site activities, including day and residential visits and work related activities, we will check that effective child protection arrangements are in place.

Types and Indicators of Abuse

Child Abuse occurs when 'a child is neglected, harmed or not provided with proper care. Children may be abused in many settings, in a family, in an institutional or community setting, by those known to them, or more rarely by a stranger.' (ACPC, 2005)

We use the following definitions for child abuse, according to Cooperating to Safeguard 2016.

NEGLECT

Neglect is the failure to provide for a child's basic needs, whether it be adequate food, clothing, hygiene, supervision or shelter that is likely to result in the serious impairment of a child's health or development. Children who are neglected often also suffer from other types of abuse.

Physical indicators:

- ❖ constant hunger
- ❖ exposed to danger; lack of supervision
- ❖ inadequate/ inappropriate clothing
- ❖ poor hygiene
- ❖ untreated illness

Behavioural indicators:

- ❖ tiredness, listlessness
- ❖ lack of peer relationships
- ❖ low self-esteem
- ❖ compulsive stealing/ begging

PHYSICAL

Physical Abuse is deliberately physically hurting a child. It might take a variety of different forms, including hitting, biting, pinching, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning or suffocating a child.

Physical indicators:

- ❖ scratches
- ❖ bite marks or welts
- ❖ bruises in places difficult to mark e.g. behind ears, groin
- ❖ burns, especially cigarette burns
- ❖ untreated injuries

Behavioural indicators:

- ❖ self-mutilation tendencies
- ❖ chronic runaway
- ❖ aggressive or withdrawn
- ❖ fear of returning home
- ❖ undue fear of adults
- ❖ fearful watchfulness

EMOTIONAL

Emotional Abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child. It is also sometimes called psychological abuse and it can have severe and persistent adverse effects on a child's emotional development.

Physical indicators:

- ❖ sudden speech disorders
- ❖ wetting and soiling
- ❖ signs of mutilation
- ❖ attention seeking behaviour
- ❖ frequent vomiting

Behavioural indicators:

- ❖ rocking, thumb sucking
- ❖ fear of change
- ❖ chronic runaway
- ❖ poor peer relationships

SEXUAL

Sexual Abuse occurs when others use and exploit children sexually for their own gratification or gain or the gratification of others. Sexual abuse may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape, or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside clothing.

Physical indicators:

- ❖ soreness, bleeding in genital or anal areas
- ❖ itching in genital area
- ❖ stained or bloody underwear
- ❖ stomach pains or headaches
- ❖ pain on urination
- ❖ difficulty in walking or sitting
- ❖ bruises on inner thighs or buttocks
- ❖ anorexic/ bulimic

Behavioural indicators:

- ❖ chronic depression
- ❖ inappropriate language, sexual knowledge for age group
- ❖ making sexual advances to adults or other children
- ❖ low self-esteem
- ❖ afraid of dark
- ❖ wariness of being approached by anyone
- ❖ substance/ drug abuse

EXPLOITATION

Exploitation is the intentional ill-treatment, manipulation or abuse of power and control over a child or young person; to take selfish or unfair advantage of a child or young person or situation, for personal gain. It may manifest itself in many forms such as child labour, slavery, servitude, engagement in criminal activity, begging, benefit or other financial fraud or child trafficking.

CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION

Child sexual exploitation is a form of sexual abuse where children are sexually exploited for money, power or status. It can involve violent, humiliating and

degrading sexual assaults. In some cases, young people are persuaded or forced into exchanging sexual activity for money, drugs, gifts, affection or status.

FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION

FGM involves procedures that include the partial or total removal of the external female genital organs for cultural or other non-therapeutic reasons. The practice is medically unnecessary, extremely painful and has serious health consequences, both at the time when the mutilation is carried out and in later life.

Indicators that FGM is imminent:

- ❖ Being a girl aged 5 - 8 within a community where FGM is practised
- ❖ Prolonged return to country of origin for summer break - giving sufficient healing time before return to school
- ❖ Female elder visiting from a country of origin
- ❖ Child may tell other children about it
- ❖ A girl may disclose that she is to have a 'special procedure' or attend a special occasion to 'become a woman'
- ❖ Parents state that they or a relative will take the child out of the country for a prolonged period

SELF HARM AND SUICIDE

It is most helpful to consider self-harm as a continuum, ranging from behaviour which has a strong suicidal intent (for example, some kinds of overdose) to behaviour which is intended to help the person stay alive (such as cutting).

FORCED MARRIAGE

Indicators:

- ❖ Absence and persistent absence
- ❖ Request for extended leave of absence and failure to return from visits to country of origin
- ❖ Surveillance by siblings or cousins
- ❖ Change in behaviour, performance or punctuality

- ❖ Being withdrawn from school for 'home schooling' and not receiving suitable education at home
- ❖ Not allowed to attend extra-curricular activities
- ❖ Sudden announcement of engagement

A child may suffer or be at risk from suffering from one or more types of abuse. Abuse may take place on a single occasion or may occur repeatedly over time. Individual indicators will rarely, in isolation, provide conclusive evidence of abuse. They should be viewed as part of a jigsaw, and each small piece of information will help the DT to decide how to proceed.

It is important to realize that these signs are not a checklist and even for the experts it is often very hard to decide if a child has been abused.

With this in mind it is important to remember:

- record and date all observations of worrying marks/ behaviour.
- seek advice.
- you have a supportive not investigative role. Judgment about abuse must be left to the professionals

In the event of any member of staff having concerns other than through disclosure, s/he will;

- Record, confidentially, dates, times, frequency of certain behaviours
- Report and pass records to the Designated Teacher
- The Designated Teacher will keep a written, confidential record of all the stages of the process.
- Allegations against a member of staff

Staff should not carry out any investigation or examination of the child.

It is not the responsibility of staff to carry out investigations into cases of suspected abuse, or to make enquiries. This is the responsibility of the investigating agencies.Peer on peer abuse

Children may be harmed by other children or young people. Staff will be aware of the harm caused by bullying and will use the school's anti-bullying procedures where necessary. However, there will be occasions when a pupil's behaviour warrants a response under child protection rather than anti-bullying procedures.

Peer on peer abuse can take many forms, including:

- **physical abuse** such as biting, hitting, kicking or hair pulling
- **harmful sexualised behaviour/sexual abuse** such as inappropriate sexual language, touching, sexual assault
- **sexting**, including pressuring another person to send a sexual imagery or video content
- **teenage relationship abuse** - defined as a pattern of actual or threatened acts of physical, sexual or emotional abuse, perpetrated against a current or former partner
- **initiation/hazing** - used to induct newcomers into an organisation such as sports team or school groups by subjecting them to a series of potentially humiliating, embarrassing or abusing trials which promote a bond between them
- **prejudiced behaviour** - a range of behaviours which causes someone to feel powerless, worthless or excluded and which relates to prejudices around belonging, identity and equality, in particular prejudices linked to disabilities, special educational needs, ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds, gender and sexual identity.
-

Abuse is abuse and should never be tolerated or passed off as 'banter' or 'part of growing up'. Different gender issues can be prevalent when dealing with peer on peer abuse, for example girls being sexually touched/assaulted or boys being subject to initiation/hazing type violence.

At our school, we take the following steps to minimise or prevent the risk of peer on peer abuse.

- An open and honest environment where young people feel safe to share information about anything that is upsetting or worrying them.
- Assemblies are used to provide a moral framework outlining acceptable behaviour and stressing the effects of bullying.
- PDMU is used to reinforce the message through stories, role play, current affairs and other suitable activities.

- Staff will endeavour always to create surroundings where everyone feels confident and at ease in school.
- We will ensure that the school is well supervised, especially in areas where children might be vulnerable.

All allegations of peer on peer abuse MUST be passed to the DT immediately.

Sexting

There is no accepted definition of 'sexting' but most professionals agree that it refers to the sending or posting of sexually suggestive images, including nude or semi-nude photographs of a person under 18 years of age, via mobiles or over the internet. The [UKCCIS advice document](#) refers to this as 'youth produced sexual imagery'.

All incidents involving youth produced sexual imagery will be responded to in line with the school's safeguarding and child protection policy.

- The incident will be referred to the DT immediately and the DT will hold an initial review meeting with appropriate staff. If appropriate, there will be subsequent interviews with the young people involved.
- Parents will be informed at an early stage and involved in the process unless there is good reason to believe that involving parents would put the young person at risk of harm.
- At any point in the process, if there is a concern a young person has been harmed or is at risk of harm a referral will be made to Social Services in accordance with this policy.

Children who may be particularly vulnerable

Some children may have an increased risk of abuse. Many factors can contribute to an increase in risk, including prejudice and discrimination, isolation, social exclusion, communication issues and reluctance on the part of some adults to accept that abuse can occur. To ensure that all of our pupils receive equal protection, we will give special consideration to children who are:

- disabled or have special educational needs
- young carers
- affected by parental substance misuse, domestic violence or parental mental health needs

- asylum seekers
- living away from home
- vulnerable to being bullied, or engaging in bullying
- living in temporary accommodation
- live transient lifestyles
- living in chaotic and unsupportive home situations
- vulnerable to discrimination and maltreatment on the grounds of race, ethnicity, religion, disability or sexuality
- at risk of sexual exploitation
- do not have English as a first language
- at risk of female genital mutilation (FGM)
- at risk of forced marriage
- at risk of being drawn into extremism.

Children missing education

Attendance, absence and exclusions are closely monitored. A child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse and neglect, including sexual abuse and sexual exploitation. The DT will monitor unauthorised absence and take appropriate action including notifying the local authority, particularly where children go missing on repeated occasions and/or are missing for periods during the school day. Staff must be alert to signs of children at risk of travelling to conflict zones, female genital mutilation and forced marriage.

PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING SUSPECTED (OR DISCLOSED) CHILD ABUSE

The Designated Teacher for Child Protection (DT) is Orlagh Uí Dheoráin

In Orlagh's absence, the **Deputy Designated Teacher for Child Protection (DDT)** Rachael Nig Uiginn, will assume responsibility for Child Protection. Fionnuala Ní Dhuifinn assumes responsibility in the Naíscoil. On the rare occasion that neither DT nor DDT is in the school, the Principal, Deirdre Nic Suibhne will assume responsibility for Child Protection.

If a child makes a disclosure to a teacher or to another member of staff which gives rise to concerns about possible abuse, or if a member of staff has concerns about a child, **the member of staff must act promptly.**

He/she should not investigate - this is a matter for Social Services - but should report these concerns immediately to the DT, discuss the matter with her, make full notes (signing and dating them), and hand the note to the DT.

The DT will discuss the matter with the Principal as a matter of urgency to plan a course of action, and ensure that a written record of decisions is made.

The DT, in consultation with the Principal, will decide whether, in the best interests of the child, the matter needs to be referred to Social Services. **If there are concerns that the child may be at risk of significant harm, the school is obliged to make a referral to Social Services.** Unless there are concerns that a parent/guardian may be the possible abuser, the parents/guardians will be informed immediately.

The DT may seek clarification or advice and consult with The Child Protection Support Service for Schools (CPSSS), the Designated Officer for Child Protection at the EA, or a senior social worker before a referral is made. No decisions to refer a child to Social Services will be made without full consideration and on appropriate advice. **The safety of the child is our first priority.**

Where there are concerns about possible abuse of a child, the DT will inform:

- Social Services - using the regional UNOCINI framework (Understanding the Needs of Children in Northern Ireland)*

- EA's Designated Officer for Child Protection

* The UNOCINI referral will be made within 24 hours of the initial telephone referral to social services Gateway Team

(This will be done in an envelope marked 'CONFIDENTIAL - CHILD PROTECTION')

If any member of staff feels unsure about what to do if he/she has concerns about a child, or unsure about being able to recognise signs or symptoms of possible child abuse, he/she should talk with the DT.

It should be noted that information given to members of staff by a child or by anyone else concerning possible child abuse cannot be held 'in confidence' and has to be passed on to the DT.

Record Keeping

- The School will keep accurate records of concerns expressed and of the action which has been taken. These will be maintained in a secure location, separately from the general records.
- **It will be the responsibility of the Designated Teacher to ensure that such records are kept up-to-date and forwarded when a child moves school (in compliance with DE guidance)**
- Only the Principal, the Designated Teacher and Deputy Teachers will have access to Child Protection records.

PREVENTION

We offer a supportive environment to children. The school has developed and provides a safeguarding ethos and a preventative curriculum. We offer children an alternative model to violent or abusive behaviour and alternative methods of responding.

The school offers prevention and protection on three levels:

- creating a listening environment that makes it easier to for children to share their concerns
- responding appropriately to child protection concerns according to procedures laid down in DENI Circular 99/10 'Pastoral Care in Schools - Child Protection'
- enhancing self-esteem and encouraging pro-social skills, breaking any cycle of abusive behaviour.

The Board of Governors ensures that the school curriculum includes a programme for pupils on personal protection. Some programmes currently in use are PSNI workshops, NSPPC workshops, Safe Hands Programme, Roots of Empathy, Internet Safety Week, Anti-Bullying week, Circle Time and School assemblies.

The Board of Governors ensures that the school has in place an Anti-Bullying Policy.

The Board of Governors ensures that the school has and follows the Code of Conduct of all staff, teaching and non-teaching. The Code of Conduct covers all activities organised in and by the school, whether on school premises or elsewhere.

The Board of Governors ensures that all persons beyond the school staff who are invited to be involved as helpers/leaders on trips, residential visits, or other activities, either within or without school are subject to vetting procedures in keeping with the current arrangements for the care and protection of young people.

Notices in the school will inform children of the identity of the designated and deputy designated teachers.

All substitute teachers and visitors who will have contact with the children will be provided with a summary of the child protection procedures and with the Code of Conduct.

ALLEGATIONS AGAINST STAFF - CHILD PROTECTION

Gaelscoil an tSeanchaí has a responsibility to safeguard and promote pupil safety and well-being. Our Pastoral Care Policy includes a Child Protection Policy which reflects both its legal duties and its pastoral responsibilities. The policy works to create an ethos which contributes to the care, safety and well-being of children.

In this context, a complaint or allegation may be made about the conduct or activities of staff of the school towards a child or children.

It is therefore, important that all staff implement the guidelines on reporting alleged abuse (for their own self-protection and the other children)

Where a concern is raised about possible child abuse by an adult working in the school, the Principal (or the DT if the Principal is unavailable) must be informed immediately. The above procedures will apply (unless the complaint is about the Designated Teacher or the Principal).

Where the matter is referred to social services the member of staff may be removed from duties involving direct contact with pupils, and may be suspended from duty as a precautionary measure pending investigations by social services. The Chairperson of the Board of Governors will be informed immediately.

If a concern is raised about possible child abuse by the Principal, the DT must be informed immediately. She will inform the Chairperson of the Board of Governors and together they will take appropriate advice from the Child Protection Support Services for Schools (EA) and ensure the appropriate action is taken.

Allegations concerning staff who no longer work at the school, or historical allegations will be reported to the police.

Procedure where the School has concerns, or has been given information, about possible abuse by someone other than a member of staff

Member of staff completes the Note of Concern on what has been observed or shared and must ACT PROMPTLY.

Source of concern is notified that the school will follow up appropriately on the issues raised.



Staff member discusses concerns with the Designated Teacher or Deputy Designated Teacher in his/her absence and provides note of concern.



Designated Teacher should consult with the Principal or other relevant staff before deciding upon action to be taken, always taking care to avoid undue delay. If required, advice may be sought from a CPSS officer.



Child Protection referral is required

Designated Teacher seeks consent of the parent/carer and/or the child (if they are competent to give this) unless this would place the child at risk of significant harm then telephones the Children's Services Gateway Team and/or the PSNI if a child is at immediate risk. He/she submits a completed UNOCINI referral form within 24 hours.

Child Protection referral is not required

School may consider other options including monitoring the situation within an agreed timescale; signposting or referring the child/parent/carers to appropriate support services such as the Children's Services Gateway Team or local Family Support Hub with parental consent, and child/young person's consent (where appropriate).

Designated Teacher clarifies/discusses concern with child/ parent/carers and decides if a child protection referral is or is not required.



Where appropriate the source of the concern will be informed as to the action taken. The Designated Teacher will maintain a written record of all decisions and actions taken and ensure that this record is appropriately and securely stored.

Dealing with Allegations of Abuse Against a Member of Staff

Key Points

Lead individual learns of an allegation against a member of staff and informs the Chair/Vice Chair of BoG as appropriate.



Guidance on the Next Steps

Lead individual then establishes the facts, seeks advice from the key agencies as appropriate, usually through informal discussion.



Possible Outcomes

Following on from establishing the facts, seeking advice from Key Agencies and discussion with the Chair and/or BoG to agree a way forward from the options below.



Precautionary suspension is not appropriate and the matter is concluded.

Allegation addressed through relevant disciplinary procedures.

Precautionary suspension under Child Protection procedures imposed

Alternatives to precautionary suspension imposed

CHILD WELFARE: PARENTS' GUIDE TO CHILD PROTECTION

How Parents Can Report Alleged Abuse By A Member Of Staff Or Someone Else

It is important for parents to be aware of the arrangements that are in place in the school if they wish to make known any concerns that they may have about the safety of their own child or of any other child in the school.

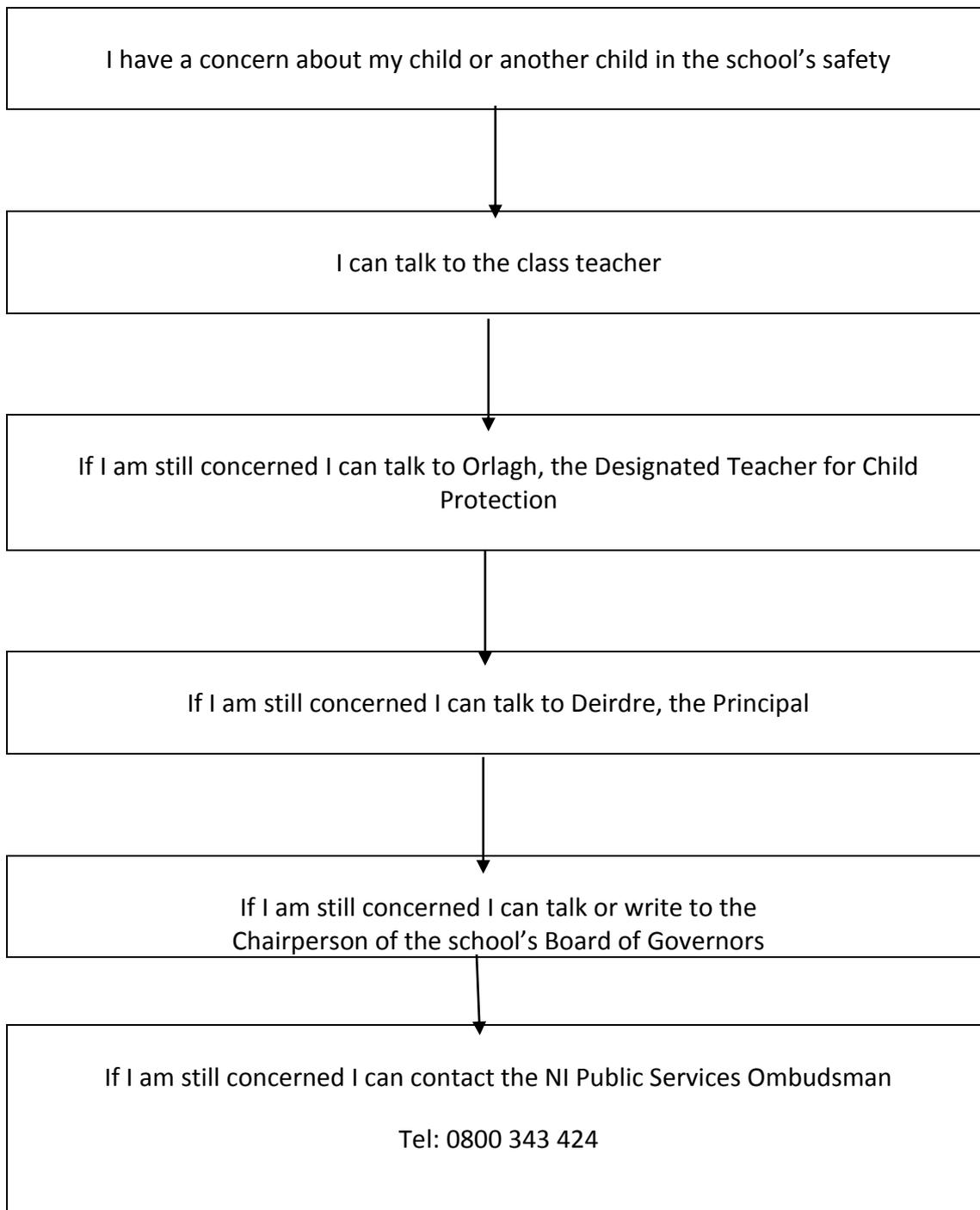
When a parent passes on information or a concern the school will:

- make full factual notes of the parent's concern;
- plan a course of action and make a written record;
- seek clarification or advice from the Designated Officers of the EA, and if necessary, make a referral to Social Services using a UNOCINI referral form and inform the above if there are concerns that the child may be at risk.

Parents will be kept informed on the progress and outcome of their concern in accordance with the advice received

How a parent can report a concern.

If you are concerned about a child protection issue please follow the steps outlined below.



At anytime, I can write to or talk to a Gateway Duty Social Worker or PSNI

Child Protection Services at EA: 028 94482223

VERIFICATION STRATEGY FOR PUPIL ALLEGING ABUSE

If signs of abuse are reported to a teacher by a child, care must be taken by the teacher in talking to the child.

Our approach is to re-assure the child but no guarantee of confidentiality can be given.

Seven things to say to a child

1. I believe you (take what the child says seriously)
2. Tell me what has happened (do not interrupt or ask leading questions react calmly)
3. I am glad you have told me this (give recognition to their trust in you - they want something done)
4. I am sorry this has happened to you (don't slander perpetrator)
5. It is not and never was your fault.
6. We are going to do something about this together.
7. Explain to the child what will happen next (use the child's words)

CONFIDENTIALITY

Where a child confides in a member of staff or a volunteer and requests that the information is kept secret it is important that the child is told sensitively that it may be necessary to share the information with those who need to know about it, and explain that this is important to ensure the child's safekeeping.

All staff and volunteers who receive sensitive information about children or parents in the course of their professional duties should be aware that Gaelscoil an tSeanchaí such information is confidential, and is not to be made the subject of general conversation, or disclosed to others outside the school other than statutory officials, as required by this policy.

All records of a safeguarding or Child Protection nature are held securely within the school. Access to such records is restricted to the Principal, Designated Teacher and Deputy Designated Teacher for Child Protection.

HOW TO RESPOND TO A CHILD WHO MAKES A DISCLOSURE

1. Receive

- Stay calm
- Listen to what the child is saying without displaying shock or disbelief
- Accept what the child is saying
- Be discreet

2. Reassure

- Reassure the child that they have done the right thing by talking to you, **do not make promises that you cannot keep** (eg everything will be alright now, I'll stay with you)
- Do not promise confidentiality. Staff have a duty to refer the matter to the Designated Teacher for Child Protection. Explain that you will need to talk to Dean who will know what to do next.
- Do reassure and alleviate guilt if the child refers to it

3. Respond

- Respond to the child only as far as is necessary for you to establish whether or not you need to refer the matter to the Designated Teacher for Child Protection
- Do ask open questions (can you tell me what happened? Anything else you wish to tell me? Yes ...)
- Do not ask closed questions (those that will evoke a yes or no response, eg Did X do this to you?). Such questions invalidate evidence where a subsequent court action is necessary.
- Do not criticise the perpetrator as the child may love that person
- Do explain what you will do next (talk with the Designated Teacher who will know how to get help)

4. Record

- Make notes as soon as possible after hearing what the child has said and write them up.
- Do not destroy these original notes
- Record the date, time place, people present and any noticeable non-verbal behaviour. Record the exact words the child used as much as possible. If the child uses 'pet' words, record those rather than translating them into 'proper' words. Any injuries or marks noticed can be depicted on a diagram showing position and extent

- Record statements and observable things, rather than your interpretations and assumptions.
- Sign the record and hand it to the Designated Teacher

All written records of concerns about children, even where there is no need to refer the matter immediately, are securely maintained, separate from the main pupil file, and in a locked location.

5. Refer

- **Concerns about possible abuse must be referred to the Designated Teacher as soon as possible within the working day.** He will liaise with the Principal in the decision-making process regarding possible referral to statutory services.

It is important to remember that the person who first encounters a case of alleged abuse is not responsible for deciding whether abuse has occurred. That is a task for the professional Child Protection agencies, following a referral from the Designated Teacher for Child Protection in the school.

HELP FOR PUPILS - CHILD PROTECTION

Age-appropriate display cards informing children what to do if they are unhappy in school or elsewhere will be displayed in prominent places throughout the school to reassure children of what to do if they are worried or concerned and remind them that they will be listened to.

Supporting Vulnerable Children and Young people

The staff of Gaelscoil an tSeanchaí recognise that children who are abused or witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth. They may feel helplessness, humiliation and some sense of blame. The school may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. When at school, their behaviour may be challenging or they may be withdrawn.

Gaelscoil an tSeanchaí will endeavour to support the pupils who are exposed to risk of harm through supporting such pupils in accordance with his/her agreed protection plan. Support for all pupils in the school to develop skills in self-protection and confidence will be afforded through:

- The content of the curriculum, particularly through Personal Development for Mutual Understanding
- The school ethos which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and gives pupils a sense of being valued.
- The school behaviour policy which is aimed at supporting vulnerable pupils in the school. The school will ensure that pupils understand the difference between acceptable and unacceptable behaviours towards themselves and others
- Liaison with other agencies that support the pupil such as Social Services, Education & Welfare Service, Educational Psychology, PSNI and the school nurse.

GAELSCOIL AN TSEANCHÁI'S VETTING PROCEDURES

The selection and appointment process is the starting point for ensuring that only those who are suitable are employed to work in close proximity with children, in either a paid or unpaid capacity in our school.

In order that all reasonable steps are taken to employ and engage suitable staff to work with the children in our care we follow the guidance on pre-employment checking and safe recruitment practices provided by the Department of Education and have adopted the new arrangements for vetting and checking of staff prior to appointment or use as volunteers within the school:

- DE Circular 2006/06. Child Protection : Recruitment of People to Work with Children and Young People in Educational Settings
- DE Circular 2006/07. Child Protection: Employment of Substitute Teachers
- DE Circular 2006/08 Child Protection: Training Requirements for School Governors on Staff Recruitment and Selection Panels
- DE Circular 2006/09 Child Protection: Criminal Background Checking of Staff in Schools - Programme to Extend Coverage
- DE Circular 2006/25 Child Protection: Vetting of School Governors
- DE Circular 2008/03 Pre-Employment Checking of Persons to Work in Schools - New Arrangements
- DE Circular 2008/10 Employment of Substitute Teachers
- DE Circular 2012/19 Pre-employment Checks -Guidance for schools and employing authorities on changes to pre-employment checks and safer recruitment practices
- DE Circular 2013/01 Pre-employment Checks - Guidance for schools and employing authorities on changes to pre-employment vetting checks and safer recruitment practices

Copies of these circulars are available on the DE website: www.deni.gov.uk . Click on 'Circulars'

All staff - whether paid or unpaid - are inducted in our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy prior to contact with the pupils in our school.

LEGISLATION	TOPIC	DETAIL
The Criminal Law Act (NI) 1967	Disclosure	This act includes measures for failing to disclose an arrestable offence to the police.
Children and Young Persons Act (Northern Ireland) 1968	Offences against children and young persons	Miscellaneous offences against children and young persons (moral and physical dangers)
Protection of Children (NI) Order 1978	Indecent Images	Offences in relation to indecent images of children
The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child	The Rights of the Child	The United Kingdom agreed to be bound by the Convention in 1991. It sets out the rights which all children and young people up to the age of 18 should have.
Article 3 of The Children (NI) Order 1995	Children's Welfare	Child's welfare to be paramount consideration
Children (Public Performances) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1996	Public Performance Licensing	Establishes age-appropriate conditions under which children may participate in public entertainment events (broadcast and live performance). The licensing authority is the Education Authority.
Human Rights Act 1998	Protection of children and young people	State Authorities must use their powers reasonably and proportionally to protect children and young people.
The Education (NI) Order 1998	Reasonable force in restraint of learners	Use of Reasonable Force - Article 4, outlines the powers a member of school staff can use in restraining learners.
Articles 17 and 18 of the Education and Libraries (NI) Order 2003	Statutory duty on Boards of Governors	Duty on Boards of Governors to safeguard and promote the welfare of learners and Child Protection Measures
Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) Act 2003	Offence to take a child abroad for the purposes of FGM	Extends the existing legislation criminalising female genital mutilation in the UK, by making it an offence for UK nationals or permanent UK residents to take a girl abroad, or to help others to take a girl abroad, to carry out female genital mutilation, even in countries where the practice is legal
The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (Northern Ireland) Order 2007	Child Protection	This act sets out measures to prevent unsuitable adults from working with children
The Sexual Offences (NI) Order 2008	Sexual activity with a minor. Grooming	Under this Order, all sexual activity with a young person of either gender under the age of 16 is now illegal, even if both parties are under 16 Article 22 of the Order makes "grooming" a specific offence where it is followed up by a meeting, or intended meeting with the victim.
Safeguarding Board Act (NI) 2011	Establishment of SBNI	This act sets out the law for the creation of a new regional Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland and the establishment of five Safeguarding Panels to support the SBNI's work at a Health and Social Care Trust level.
Children's Services Co-operation Act (NI) 2015	Co-operation between children's services	Places a requirement on individuals and organisations providing children's services to children to co-operate with each other to devise and implement cross cutting strategies.
Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (Northern Ireland) 2016	Statutory duty on BoGs in relation to prevention of bullying	Provides a definition of bullying and BoG responsibilities to secure measures to prevent bullying
CIRCULARS	TOPIC	DETAIL
Circular 2003/13	Child Protection STATUTORY	Guidance for schools on the Welfare and Protection of Pupils Education and Libraries (NI) Order 2003 School review required 'from time to time' – annually advised
Circular 2004/09	Drugs STATUTORY	Drugs: Guidance for Schools
Circular 2006/06	Recruitment practices	Guidance on safer recruitment practices for education authorities

	STATUTORY	
Circular 2006/07	Employment of teachers (substitute)	Guidance for schools on the employment of substitute teachers
Circular 2006/08	Child Protection Training STATUTORY	Guidance for schools on the requirement for child protection training in relation to interviewing and selection panels Renewal advised at least every three years
Circular 2006/09	Vetting (School staff)	Guidance on the vetting of paid and unpaid staff
Circular 2006/25	Vetting (Governors)	Guidance on the requirement for vetting of school governors
Circular 2007/01	Internet use	Acceptable use of the internet and digital technologies in schools School review required – 3 years at least is advised
Circular 2008/03	Pre-employment checks	Pre-employment checking of persons to work in schools
Circular 2008/10	Employment of Substitute teachers	From 1st August 2008 substitute teachers must be booked on line via NISTR
Circular 2010/01	RSE guidance	Guidance on Relationships and Sexuality Education
Circular 2010/07	Attendance	Learner Attendance: Absence Recording by Schools
Circular 2010/18	Governors' role	The governors' role set out in DE Governors' Handbook School review required – 3 years at least is advised
Circular 2011/22	Internet use	Internet Safety guidance
Circular 2012/19	Pre-employment checks	Guidance for schools and employing authorities on changes to pre-employment checking and safer recruitment practices
Circular 2013/01	Pre-employment checks	Guidance for schools and employing authorities on pre-employment vetting checking and safer recruitment practices
Circular 2013/16	RSE policy	Reminds schools of the need to have a policy on Relationships and Sexuality in place.
Circular 2013/25	E-safety guidance	eSafety Guidance – provides information and guidance on eSafety within the context of the new C2k contract, Education Network (NI) and in relation to non-C2k networks School review required – 3 years at least is advised
Circular 2014/14	Learner participation	Guidance on how to encourage learner participation in decision making in schools
Circular 2014/24	Education Other Than At School pupils	Section 6: Guidance for schools and providers with responsibilities for pastoral care and safeguarding.
Circular 2014/27	Managing persons who pose a risk	Managing persons who pose a risk to learners
Circular 2015/13	Allegations of abuse	Dealing with allegations of abuse against a member of staff
Circular 2015/22	RSE guidance	Relationship and sexuality Education (RSE) guidance
Circular 2015/23	Drugs STATUTORY	Drugs Guidance
Circular 2016/11	Class sizes in post-primary schools – practical subjects	Requirement for a health and safety risk assessment in post-primary practical classes over 20 pupils
Circular 2016/05	Harmful Sexual Behaviour	Children Who Display Harmful Sexualised Behaviour
Circular 2016/20	Record keeping in schools	Advice and guidance to schools on the recording and retention of child protection concerns
Circular 2016/26	Effective educational uses of mobile digital devices	Research-based advice and guidance
Circular 2016/27	Online Safety	A set of guiding principles for keeping learners and the wider school community safe online and for prioritising online safety within the school's preventative education curriculum and overall Safeguarding Policy
Circular 2017/04 (replaces 1999/10)	Child protection/pastoral care ASPECTS ARE STATUTORY	Principle guidance on child protection in schools inc. Anti-bullying policy Governors should review CP Policy - annually is advised

Appendix

Related Safeguarding policies

- Pastoral Care Policy
- Positive Behaviour Policy
- Guidance on Safe Handling and Use of Reasonable Force
- Intimate Care Policy
- Healthy Eating Policy
- Anti-bullying Policy
- Visitors to the School
- Mobile Phones
- Code of Conduct
- Drugs

PASTORAL CARE POLICY FOR GAELSCOIL AN TSEANCHAI

Pastoral Care concerns the total welfare of the child. The pastoral aspect is inclusive of curriculum development, special needs, staff development, home - school links and a positive discipline policy. The evaluation of the schools system of pastoral care is effective when the school policy and planning for pastoral care are fully implemented. This is then reflected in the quality of provision within and beyond the classroom and in the effectiveness of the support arrangements for individual pupils.

At all levels of the caring process, all staff and pupils need to feel valued, safe and secure.

At Gaelscoil an tSeanchaí we:

- promote values and attitudes
- ensure that our teaching assists each pupil reach his/her full potential in curricular and extra-curricular activities
- provide children with the social and life skills necessary for a successful and happy future
- develop home- school links in order to establish and maintain parental support and co-operation
- provide support for pupils who are experiencing difficulty functioning as members of the school community
- avail of the support of appropriate external agencies for the good of the pupil
- provide a safe and secure learning environment in which each child feels supported and valued
- ensure relevant, professional training for all our staff to meet these demands. Training of both teaching and non-teaching staff is led by the co-ordinator
- create a working environment where each teacher feels supported and valued
- provide a culture which promotes inclusion

We achieve this by:

- providing an appropriate learning environment adequately resourced
- providing an extensive after-school programme
- encouraging all children to work to the best of their ability in school at home
- encouraging children to wear the appropriate school uniform and come to school with the necessary books and equipment
- showing respect for each other and for school property
- encouraging parents to support the teacher through their children's work and ensuring their children attend school regularly, punctually, in uniform, with all the requirements for the day
- liaising with parents through notes, notices and the school website
- using the Reward System and Pupil of the Month Awards based on personal and academic achievements

The Pupil Council

The Pupil Council was established to give pupils a voice. It includes two representatives- one boy and one girl- from each of the classes in Primary 4-7 and meets once a month and is overseen by Rachael Nig Uiginn.

The Council operates like any other committee and reports back the issues discussed to their class.

The Council involves the children in decision-making within the school and allows children to express opinions and make staff aware of issues important to them in a forum where they are listened to and taken seriously.

The Council encourages:

- pupil involvement in improving school life for everyone
- pupils to work as partners with staff in developing a safe, caring and inclusive school community
- the involvement of the children in solving problems and resolving conflict
- pupils to respect school property and its upkeep

The Parents' Committee

Cairde agus Teaghlaigh le Chéile, formally established in January 2016, welcomes and encourages:

- parent involvement in improving school life for everyone
- parents to work as partners with staff in developing a safe, caring and inclusive school community
- the organisation of various social events by parents to raise funds to buy resources to help pupil learning

POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR POLICY FOR GAELSCOIL AN TSEANCHAI

This policy statement is an attempt to outline our approach to encourage high standards of behaviour in the school and the community. The underlying principle is to focus on positive as opposed to negative aspects of behaviour.

There are 5 key aspects to the policy. All members of the school community should:

- treat each other with respect and recognise a balance between rights and responsibilities
- refrain from raising their voice or shouting unnecessarily
- encourage each other to achieve of their best
- create an atmosphere in which all feel safe and able to express themselves in an appropriate manner
- encourage and support each other to express ourselves in Irish at all times
- provide a nurturing environment in which self-esteem is promoted

The development of a Positive Behaviour Policy is governed by the following rules for children:

- we listen to instructions and explanations and give our best in all our work
- we listen to each other (without interrupting!)
- we resolve conflict by talking about the issue
- we contribute to a peaceful atmosphere
- we treat school property with respect
- we stay within the playground boundaries
- we take pride in wearing our school uniform

The implementation of the above rules via a scheme of rewards and sanctions is adapted to suit each age group. The class teacher is central to this implementation and in doing this, will call upon his/her own professional judgement.

Acceptable behaviour is rewarded with sincere and frequent praise. Teachers implement their own scheme of rewards (stickers, small stationery items, am órga, by telling good news to Deirdre) within their respective classrooms depending on the age and maturity of their children.

In the Naíscoil, one child from each class is chosen daily as 'Réalt an Lae'. In the Gaelscoil, children who have made a special effort in the classroom or who have made their own contribution to school life are praised at weekly assemblies: P1 - 7 are presented with a certificate for being Gaeilgeoir, Oibrí, Páiste na Seachtaine and one pupil receives 'Moladh an Phríomhoide'. All these pupils have their photograph displayed in the school foyer and on the

school website. Children can also be awarded an 'on the spot' moladh speisialta/ green card (for being very kind, helpful or thoughtful).

Inappropriate behaviour, however, will result in sanctions which are primarily the responsibility of the class teacher. Sometimes it is necessary for the teacher to contact parents. However, in cases of persistent or more serious unacceptable behaviour, children will be sent to Deirdre. Parents are usually contacted at this stage and in exceptional circumstances it is sometimes necessary to ask them to take their child home for the remainder of that day.

SANCTIONS

As is the form regarding all disciplinary actions, it is essential that a pupil understands fully that it is the behaviour which is not acceptable and not the pupil as a person. It is our policy that children realise that they will have to accept the consequences of their decisions and actions if they make other children feel unsafe and unhappy in school.

Inappropriate behaviour will result in sanctions which are primarily the responsibility of the class teacher. Teachers will record breaches of discipline and the respective action taken. Pupils are made aware that such incidents are recorded by teachers.

We have a staged approach to managing problematic behaviour. Children exhibiting such behaviour will follow these steps:

- be given one more chance
- no playtime at break for Key Stage 2 pupils and a 5-minute time-out for those at Foundation/Key Stage 1
- white Card (warning)
- yellow Card (second warning)
- red Card (including a letter/phone-call home and meeting between parents and Principal).

If a child receives a card, it will be sent home and parents will be asked to sign the card and return it to school. You are of course welcome to contact the school to discuss any concerns.

We have also implemented a 'Kind Hands' rule, which means that children are not allowed to put their hands on other children, in a way that may hurt, annoy or cause offence, even if this is done in a playful manner.

Behaviours which require immediate attention of the Principal

1. any act of vandalism or damage to school property or to staff property
2. swearing or use of abusive language to any other person be they teacher, supervisor or child.
3. using threatening language or dangerous implement
4. involved in any actions which constitute a danger to other children

5. "mitching" from school or running out of school
6. tampering with firefighting equipment.
7. biting or physically hitting out and injuring another child or member of staff
8. other serious incidents such as fighting or repeated exclusion from activities

Such incidents may involve parents being called to a formal meeting in the school and restitution sought where property has been damaged. It may be requested that the child be brought to and collected from school by parents or removed from the school at lunch time. If such behaviours indicate a specific behavioural problem the child may be referred to the Educational Psychologist for assessment.

SAFE HANDLING & USE OF REASONABLE FORCE

Reasonable Force

Gaelscoil an tSeanchaí has a pastoral responsibility towards the pupils in their charge and takes all responsible steps to ensure that the children's welfare is safeguarded and their safety preserved. As a school, we have a duty to promote and secure good behaviour and discipline.

Very occasionally, and only when other behaviour management strategies have failed, staff may have to use such force as is reasonable to restrain or control pupils as set out in the Education (Northern Ireland) Order 1998.

The 1998 Order authorises teachers and other members of staff at the school including classroom assistants, midday supervisors and suitably vetted volunteers to use reasonable force. Non-teaching staff and volunteers must be identified and specifically authorised by the Principal to be in control of or in charge of pupils. In an emergency any member of staff can intervene.

Reasonable force may be used when:

- a pupil attacks a member of staff or another pupil
- pupils are fighting
- a pupil is causing, or at risk of causing, injury or damage by accident, by rough play or by misuse of dangerous materials, substances or objects
- a pupil is running in a corridor or on a stairway in a way in which (s)he might cause an accident likely to injure (her)himself
- a pupil absconds from a class or tries to leave school
- a pupil persistently refuses to obey an order to leave a classroom
- a pupil is behaving in a way that is seriously disrupting a lesson

Actions which are regarded as being "Reasonable Force"

- physically intervening between pupils
- blocking a pupil's path
- a holding tactic in which a pupil is restrained without injury to enable him/her to calm down
- the holding of a pupil's arms or legs to prevent or restrict striking or kicking
- leading a pupil by the arm
- shepherding a pupil away by placing a hand in the centre of the back
- pulling - when separating children in a fight.

Actions which could cause injury or hurt should be avoided in all circumstances, even when restraining a child

- holding a pupil round the neck, or by the collar, or in any other way that might restrict the pupil's ability to breathe
- slapping, pinching, punching, kicking or using any implement on a pupil
- throwing any object at a pupil
- twisting or forcing limbs against a joint
- tripping up a pupil
- holding or pulling a pupil by the hair or ear
- holding a pupil face down on the ground
- holding a pupil in a way that may be considered indecent

Teachers should use their own professional judgement. For example, physical contact may be necessary during P.E. lessons, sports coaching, giving First Aid or comforting a pupil in distress.

Reasonable force should not be used automatically in every situation nor should it be used as a form of discipline.

As Designated Teacher for Child Protection, Dean, is responsible for overseeing these guidelines and will

- provide guidance to other staff on the use of reasonable force
- notify parents about incidents where reasonable force has had to be used
- deal with any complaints which emerge
- ensure a consistent approach within the school and the reporting arrangements
- Consult the policy on Reasonable Force

When an incident involving reasonable force arises

- try to use other behaviour management strategies first
- continue to try to communicate with the child
- make it clear physical restraint will stop when the child calms down
- stay calm
- do not intervene in an incident if you believe yourself to be at risk
- remove other pupil(s) who may be at risk from the situation
- send for help in playground or classroom

INTIMATE CARE POLICY FOR GAELSCOIL AN TSEANCHAÍ

The UN Convention of the Rights of the Child (1991) states that

Children have the right to be as healthy as possible, live and play in a safe, healthy, unpolluted environment and benefit from preventive health care and education.

Gaelscoil an tSeanchaí and Naíscoil an tSeanchaí are committed to ensuring that all staff responsible for the intimate care of children will undertake their duties in a professional manner at all times. Gaelscoil an tSeanchaí and Naíscoil an tSeanchaí recognise that there is a need to treat all children with respect when intimate care is given. No child should be attended to in a way that causes distress or pain. The aim of this policy is to work in partnership with parents to help their child develop a healthy interest in and an understanding of how to look after his/her own personal needs and to take account of Health and Safety and also Child Protection issues.

Our Approach To Best Practice

The management of all children with intimate care needs will be carefully planned. The child who requires intimate care is treated with respect at all times, the child's welfare and dignity is of paramount importance.

Staff who provide intimate care are fully aware of best practice. Apparatus will be provided to assist with children who need special arrangements following assessment from a physiotherapist or occupational therapist as required.

The child will be supported to achieve the highest level of autonomy that is possible given their age and abilities. Staff will encourage each child to do as much for (her)himself as (s)he can. This may mean, for example, giving the child responsibility for washing themselves. Individual intimate care plans will be drawn up, as appropriate, for particular children in order to suit their circumstances and this will be done in consultation with the parent.

Each child's right to privacy will be respected. Careful consideration will be given to each child's situation to determine how many carers might need to be present when a child is toileted. Where possible, one child will be catered for by one adult unless there is a sound reason for having more adults present. If this is the case, the reasons should be clearly documented.

Wherever possible, the same child will not be cared for by the same adult on a regular basis. Ideally there will be a rota of carers known to the child who will provide care. This will ensure that over-familiar relationships will have less of a chance of developing, whilst at the same time will guard against the care being carried out by a succession of completely different carers.

Wherever possible staff should only care intimately for an individual of the same sex. However, in certain circumstances this principle may need to be waived where failure to provide appropriate care would result in negligence, for example female staff supporting boys in a situation where no male staff is available.

Intimate care arrangements will be discussed with parents and carers and these arrangements recorded. The needs and wishes of children and parents will be taken into account wherever possible within the constraints of staff and equal opportunities legislation.

The Protection Of Children

Child Protection Procedures will be adhered to.

All children will be taught personal safety skills carefully matched to their level of development and understanding.

If a member of staff has any concerns about physical changes in a child's presentation eg marks, bruises, soreness, etc (s)he will immediately report concerns to the Designated persons for Child Protection: Dean Ó Sluagháin and Rachael Nig Uiginn, or in the case of Naíscóil an tSeanchaí, Aedín Ní Ghadhra.

Pupils will be offered some choice as to who deals with their personal care. As far as is practical, the child's wishes will be respected and acted upon. If a child makes an allegation against a member of staff, all necessary procedures will be followed (see Child Protection Procedures for details).

Guidance for Staff

Intimate care is any care which involves washing, touching or carrying out an invasive procedure (such as cleaning up a pupil after they have soiled themselves) to intimate personal areas. In most cases, where children are most definitely beyond the toilet-training stage, such care will involve cleaning for hygiene purposes as part of a staff member's duty of care.

The issue of intimate care is a sensitive one and will require staff to be respectful of the child's needs. The child's dignity should always be preserved with a high level of privacy, choice and control. There shall be a high awareness of Child Protection issues. Staff behaviour must be open to scrutiny and staff must work in partnership with parents and carers to provide continuity of care to children and young people wherever possible.

Health and Safety

Health and Safety is an issue when staff are changing children or dealing with a child who has had an accident and is bleeding.

Staff should always wear gloves when dealing with a child who is bleeding or soiled. Any soiled waste should be placed in a polythene waste disposal bag which can be sealed.

Guidance to safeguarding children and education staff with regards to situations which may lend themselves to allegations of abuse (physical contact, First Aid, showers, changing clothes, out of school activities and photography)

Physical Contact

All staff engaged in the care and education of children and young people need to exercise caution in the use of physical contact.

The expectation is that staff will work in 'limited touch' cultures and that when physical contact is made with pupils this will be in response to the pupil's needs at the time, will be of limited duration and will be appropriate to their age, stage of development and background.

Staff should be aware that even well-intentioned physical contact might be misconstrued directly by the child, an observer or by anyone to whom the action is described. Staff must therefore always be prepared to justify actions and accept that all physical contact be open to scrutiny.

Physical contact which is repeated with an individual child or young person is likely to raise questions unless the justification for this is formally agreed by the child, the organisation and those with parental responsibility.

Children with special needs may require more physical contact to assist their everyday learning. The general culture of 'limited touch' will be adapted where appropriate to the individual requirements of each child. The arrangements must be understood and agreed by all concerned, justified in terms of the child's needs, consistently applied and open to scrutiny. Wherever possible, consultation with colleagues should take place where any deviation from the arrangements is anticipated. Any deviation and the justification for this should be documented and reported.

Extra caution may be required where a child has suffered previous abuse or neglect. In the child's view, physical contact might be associated with such experiences and lead to staff being laid open to allegations of abuse. Additionally, many such children are extremely needy and seek out inappropriate physical contact. In such circumstances staff should deter the child without causing them a negative experience. Ensuring that a witness is present will help to protect staff from such allegations.

Restraint

There may be occasions where it is necessary for staff to restrain children physically to prevent them from inflicting damage on either themselves, others or property.

In such cases only the minimum force necessary should be used for the minimum length of time required for the child to regain self-control.

In all cases of restraint the incident must be documented and reported. Staff must be fully aware of the school's Behavior Policy and Positive Behaviour Strategies.

Under no circumstances is it permissible to use physical force as a form of punishment in order to modify behaviour, or to make a pupil comply with an instruction unless the child is in danger of causing imminent harm to himself or others.

Pupils in Distress

There may be occasions when a distressed pupil needs comfort and reassurance that may include physical touch such as a caring parent would give. Staff must remain self-aware at all times to ensure that their contact is not threatening or intrusive and not subject to misinterpretation.

Judgement will need to take account of the circumstances of a pupil's distress, their age, the extent and cause of the distress. Unless the child needs an immediate response, staff should consider whether they are the most appropriate person to respond. It may be more suitable to involve the child's relative or a counseling service.

Particular care must be taken in instances which involve the same pupil over a period of time. Where a member of staff has a particular concern about the need to provide this type of care and reassurance they should seek further advice from the Designated Teacher or Principal.

First Aid and Intimate Care

Staff who administer First Aid should ensure whenever possible that another adult or other children are present. The pupil's dignity must always be considered and where contact of a more intimate nature is required (eg assisting with toileting or the removal of wet or soiled clothes) another member of staff should be in the vicinity and should be made aware of the task being undertaken.

Regular requirements of an intimate nature should be planned for. Agreements between the school, those with parental responsibility and the child concerned should be documented and easily understood. The necessity for such requirements should be reviewed regularly. The child's view must also be actively sought and in any particular discomfort with the arrangements addressed.

Physical Education and Other Skills Coaching

Some staff are likely to come into physical contact with pupils from time to time in the course of their duties when participating in games, demonstrating an exercise or the use of equipment.

Staff should be aware of the limits within which such contact should take place and of the possibility of misinterpretation.

Where it is anticipated that a pupil might be prone to misinterpret any such contact, alternatives should be considered, perhaps involving another member of staff or a less vulnerable pupil in the demonstration.

Showering and Changing Clothes

Young people are entitled to respect and privacy when changing clothes or taking a shower. However, there must be the required level of supervision to safeguard young people with regard to Health & Safety considerations and to ensure that bullying or teasing does not occur. This means that adults should announce their intention of entering the changing rooms, avoid

remaining in changing rooms unless pupil needs require it, avoid any physical contact when children are in a state of undress and avoid any visually intrusive behaviour.

Given the vulnerabilities of the situation, it is strongly recommended that when supervising children in a state of undress, another member of staff be present. However, this may not always be possible and therefore staff need to be vigilant about their own conduct eg being discreet if changing in the same area.

Out of School Trips, Clubs etc

Staff should take particular care when supervising pupils in the less formal atmosphere of a residential setting or after-school activity. Although more informal relationships in such circumstances tend to be usual, the standard of behaviour expected of staff will be no different from the behaviour expected when in school.

To ensure pupil safety, increased vigilance may be required when monitoring behaviour on school trips, residential etc. It is important to exercise caution so that a pupil is not compromised and the member of staff does not attract allegations of overly intrusive or abusive behavior.

On such occasions, some pupils might be short of funds and would be embarrassed or singled out if this were known. It would be acceptable for a member of staff to subsidise a child, provided that this was disclosed to colleagues.

Meetings with pupils outside the school grounds, where a 'chaperone' is not present, are not permitted unless specific approval is obtained from the Principal. Staff should not place themselves in a position where they are in a vehicle, house or other venue alone with a child.

If staff come into contact with pupils whilst off duty, they must behave as though in their professional role and not give conflicting messages regarding their own conduct.

Risk assessments will be carried out before school trips and an appropriate number of vetted adults assigned to groups of children.

Photography, Videos and Similar Creative Arts

Staff should be aware of the potential for such media of teaching to be used for the wrong purpose. Additionally, children who have been previously abused in this way may feel threatened by the legitimate use of photography, filming etc. The potential for founded and unfounded allegations of abuse requires that careful consideration be given to the organisation of these activities.

The school has clear protocols for the taking and use of images and of photographic equipment. These require the justification and purpose of the activity, its content, the avoidance of one-to-one sessions, appropriate privacy if the changing of clothes is required and arrangements for access to the material and its storage.

Consent to participating in these activities should be sought from those with parental responsibility at the beginning of courses but staff should remain sensitive to those children who appear particularly uncomfortable with the activity.

All material produced should be viewed for acceptability by another member of staff. Its circulation should be in accordance with the school's 'Use of Images' policy and relevant arrangements with parents.

PERMISSION TO PROVIDE INTIMATE CARE

Sloinne an pháiste Child's Last name	
Ainm Baiste Child's First name	
Fireann/Baineann Male/Female	
Dáta Breithe Date of birth	

Ainm an tuismitheora Parent/carers name	
Seoladh Address	

I give permission to the Naíscoil an tSeanchaí /Gaelscoil an tSeanchaí to provide appropriate intimate care support to my child e.g. changing soiled clothing, washing and toileting.

I will advise the Child Protection/Pastoral Care officer of any medical complaint my child may have which affects issues of intimate care

Ainm/Name.....

Síniú/Signature.....

Gaol leis an pháiste/Relationship to child.....

Dáta/Date.....

HEALTHY EATING POLICY FOR GAELSCOIL AN TSEANCHAI



At Gaelscoil an tSeanchaí, we try to ensure that the children eat a healthy break and lunch. Currently, Primary 1-7 are encouraged to eat only fresh fruit at break time. The children are asked not to bring items such as biscuits, fizzy juice, chocolate bars to school at all.

We also want to ensure that all children eat healthily at lunch-time. We ask that you give your children the likes of sandwiches, fruit and yoghurts for lunch, along with a healthy drink (water or milk).

Whatever is not eaten in the lunch-hall is sent home in the lunch-boxes to allow you to monitor your children's eating.

One treat is permitted on Fridays e.g. a few small biscuits, a small chocolate bar, a small bag of crisps etc. Fridays will be known as 'Aoine Aoibhinn' or 'Fun Fridays'.

We would like to stress that children who eat school dinners are discouraged from bringing any extras to the dining-hall e.g. juice, crisps etc.

We recommend that children do not drink fizzy drinks at school. Water is always available in the classrooms.

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY FOR GAELSCOIL AN TSEANCHAÍ

Everybody in our school is valued. We are all different. That is what makes us special.

In this policy we have defined how we understand bullying, outlined various forms of bullying and the necessary steps for children, parents and staff to take when bullying occurs.

WHAT IS BULLYING?

Bullying is an attack on the child's right to feel safe and happy at school. It is deliberately hurtful behaviour which is repeated over a period of time and the victim finds it hard to defend him/herself. We do not use this word to define the general rough and tumble of school life.

We do our best to ensure that the children can distinguish between falling out with each other and being bullied. An occasional tiff or quarrel is not bullying.

We work together to create and support an anti-bullying culture in our school. All members of our school community have the right to work in a secure and safe environment, one in which they can express their views knowing that they will be listened to with respect.

FORMS OF BULLYING

- It may be physical: hitting, kicking, pushing, pinching, spitting
- It may be verbal: name calling, teasing, ridiculing personal appearance, mannerisms or way of speaking, making hurtful comments or spreading rumours
- It may be social: excluding a pupil from a group or an activity
- It may be psychological: belittling a pupil's abilities and achievements, causing them to lose self-esteem
- A bully will often claim that 'it was only a joke' or that they were 'only messing' or that it was an 'accident' but if you ask them is everyone laughing, is everyone enjoying it or is anyone trying to help and the answer is NO, then the line between harmless teasing and bullying has been crossed.

HAVING FUN AT SOMEONE ELSE'S EXPENSE IS BULLYING!

THE MOST IMPORTANT THING IS HOW A BULLIED CHILD FEELS.

IF YOU ARE BEING BULLIED IT IS NOT YOUR FAULT!

WHAT SHOULD A CHILD DO?

Never suffer in silence.

Talk to your teacher, parent or any adult you can trust. Do not be afraid that this will make the situation worse or that you will be telling tales. If the adults are not aware of what is going on, they cannot do anything to stop it.

Try not to react.

Try not to show that you are upset, otherwise the bully will feel that he has won. Be strong and walk away.

Find a friend or a group of friends.

Because bullies are cowards, they like to bully people that are alone, it is more difficult for them if you are with others.

WHAT SHOULD A PARENT DO?

As a first step, you should contact the school to make an appointment to talk to your child's teacher. The teacher will investigate the concern and take appropriate action. Nevertheless, the situation may take time to be resolved.

If there is no improvement or you are still concerned, please contact Dean, the school's Designated Teacher for Child Protection, Deirdre the Principal, and finally, the Board of Governors, in that order.

WHAT SHOULD THE STAFF DO?

Deal immediately with the issues and concerns of the pupil or parent

Make every effort to support both the victim and the child who is doing the bullying in an appropriate manner

Employ appropriate strategies to change the attitude and behaviour of the child who is doing the bullying

Contact the parents of any pupil involved when appropriate

Keep all parties (parents and staff) informed and involved

Ensure that there are regular follow-ups to monitor the situation

If a member of staff feels that they are being bullied either by a parent or by another member of staff then they should speak to Dean, the Designated Teacher. If, however, they feel they are being bullied by Deirdre then they should refer the matter to the Board of Governors.

OUR SCHOOL AS A COMMUNITY

As a community we support each other to help identify and tackle bullying appropriately

We ensure that pupils know that they can talk to the class teacher and to the Designated Teacher and are reassured that all bullying concerns will be dealt with in a sensitive and effective way.

We use Circle Time, PDMU and Assemblies to raise awareness among the children and to help develop anti-bullying attitudes and the self- confidence to stand up to bullying behaviour.

We recognise that all adults in the school play a vital role as role models and this is reflected in their treatment of the children and in their behaviour towards each other.

THE PREVENTATIVE CURRICULUM

We recognise that the school plays a significant part in the prevention of harm to our pupils by providing pupils with good lines of communication with trusted adults, supportive friends and an ethos of safeguarding and protection.

The school community will therefore:

- establish and maintain an ethos where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk and are listened to
- ensure that all children know there is an adult in the school whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty
- follow the curriculum for Personal Development for Mutual Understanding, an area which equips children with the skills they need to stay safe from harm and recognise to whom they should turn for help should the need arise

Mobile Phones

Mobile phones are not allowed in school. We understand that there are circumstances when children need to contact their parents after school using their mobile. In this case, parents should write a note to the class teacher explaining this and the class teacher will keep the mobile somewhere safe and return it to the child at the end of the day. It is the responsibility of the child to ask for the phone at the end of the day.

If a child brings a mobile phone to school and has no note, then the phone will be taken from the child for safe-keeping and the child's parent or guardian must contact the school and request return of the phone.

The school is not responsible for the phone while it is on school property. Mobile phones must only be used OUTSIDE the school grounds.

Children are not allowed to bring electronic games or electronic devices into school. The school does not accept responsibility for such items either.

Children should never take photographs of pupils or staff members with their mobile phones. Staff, likewise should not take photos of pupils using their mobile phones. However, should the school camera not be available and photos are taken by a staff phone, then these photos will be uploaded as soon as possible and deleted immediately.

Staff members do not use their mobile phones when they have children under their care i.e. during class time or when they are on playground duty.

It is against school policy for any child or unauthorised adult to post pictures of our pupils in school uniform or to make any written reference to pupils, staff or school business on any form of social media such as Facebook. The PTA Facebook is only for the dissemination of relevant information. As regards any other matters or concerns, school policies and procedures should be adhered to.

Communication when on School Trips

Children are not permitted to bring mobile phones on school trips

All urgent communication can be made through the school office 79300532.

On residential trips, parents can contact the class teacher through the school mobile phone, the number of which will be relayed at the time of the trip.

E-safety

Pupils will be taught to use e-mail and the internet responsibly in order to reduce the risk to themselves and others

Rules for Responsible Internet Use will be posted near computer systems

Internet use in pupils' homes is rapidly increasing and some parents may be grateful for any advice or guidance that the school can offer, especially with regard to safe access for children. The ICT co-ordinator, Dean, is willing to offer advice and suggest alternative sources of advice on the understanding that neither she, nor the school nor C2k can be held responsible for the consequences of such advice. Further school guidelines on issues such as safe internet use will be made available to parents together with printed information and internet sites providing information for parents about safe access for children. The IT co-ordinator will maintain a stock of relevant leaflets for internet safety.

Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying can be defined as the deliberate use of Information and Communications Technology (ICT), particularly mobile phones and the internet, to upset someone else.

School staff, parents and pupils aim to work together to prevent such behaviour and to act appropriately and effectively when it occurs.

Deliberate abuses which happen outside school, but which impinge upon or affect school pupils and staff will be dealt with through appropriate disciplinary and where appropriate, external agency action.

Grooming and images of child abuse

If school staff, parents or pupils suspect or are made aware of the following illegal acts it must be reported to the Designated Teacher immediately.

- A child under 16 enticed or coerced to engage in sexually explicit conduct on-line.
- Importing or transporting obscenity using telecommunications public networks.
- Knowingly receiving images of child abuse whether via the internet or other digital device (eg mobile phone)
- Images which appear to be photographs whether made by computer graphics or otherwise are also covered under Sexual Offences legislation.

CÓD IOMPAIR na FOIRNE



Gaelscoil an tSeanchaí 2018

FOR TEACHING AND NON-TEACHING STAFF

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 This Code of Conduct is intended as a guide and a help to all school staff. It sets out standards of conduct which staff are expected to follow when within, or representing the Gaelscoil an tSeanchaí. This code is not exhaustive but is written to assist staff and it is important that staff should take advice and guidance if necessary. If in doubt ask.

1.2 The underlying purpose is to ensure that the Gaelscoil an tSeanchaí provides a high quality service to its pupils and stakeholders in accordance with the Mission Statement and to promote public confidence in the integrity of the school.

1.3 It takes in the requirements of the law and attempts to define the required levels of professionalism to ensure the well-being of the school, its staff and its stakeholders.

1.4 It has been drafted to comply with School Policies and Procedures.

1.5 Staff are requested to read this Code carefully and consider the issues which it raises.

1.6 The Principal should also ensure that all staff are aware of the Code's contents and are fully briefed on its implications.

1.7 Copies will be given to all staff. In addition, the induction programme for all new staff will reinforce the principles of this Code.

1.8 Investigations of alleged breaches of this Code will be covered under the School's Disciplinary procedures and related codes of practice.

2. CODE OF CONDUCT

2.1 EXCLUSIVITY OF SERVICE

1. Staff's off-duty hours are their personal concern, but they should avoid a position where duty and private interests conflict. This includes:

- Staff members making online associations/friendships with current pupils via social networking sites such as Facebook, Bebo and MySpace.
- Staff members using texting/email facilities on either their mobile phone or PC/Mac to communicate with current pupils.

The above amendments have been included to safeguard the safety of pupils and the safety and professional integrity of school staff.

2. The school does not seek to preclude staff unreasonably from undertaking additional employment but you are required to devote your full time, attention and abilities to your duties during your working hours and to act in the best interests of the School at all times. Accordingly, you must not, without the written consent of the Board of Governors, undertake any employment or engagement which might interfere with the performance of your duties or conflict with the interests of the School.

3. It follows that, regardless of whether you are employed on a full-time or fractional contract, you are required to notify the Board of Governors/EA and Principal of any employment or engagement which you intend to undertake whilst in the employment of the school. (including any such employment or engagement which commenced before your employment began with the school).

2.2 SPECIFIC ASPECTS

1. **Discrimination:** Staff must at all times observe the School's Equal Opportunities Policies for staff and pupils and treat pupils, parents and other stakeholders in accordance with those policies.

2. **Health and Safety:** Staff must take care of their personal hygiene, safety and welfare, and that of other persons who may be affected by their acts or omissions. All staff must comply with the requirements of the School Health and Safety policy and relevant legislation and regulations, and also ensure that pupils do likewise.

3. Fire: Staff must familiarise themselves with the fire precautions, procedures and drill routines. They must regard practice fire drills or building evacuations in a positive manner, and ensure they are perceived by pupils as an essential precaution to prevent risk of injury or fatality.
5. Business Practice: Staff must maintain an impeccable standard of integrity in all their professional relationships.
6. Media: Other than on matters of publicity, only the Principal is authorised to speak or send any communication on behalf of the school to members of the press or broadcast media. This decision is to avoid any embarrassment or unfair pressure on staff. This authorisation may be extended by the principal to other staff members.
7. Copyright: Staff shall observe copyright laws on computer software and audio-visual material.
8. Data Protection Act

It is the responsibility of all employees to ensure the school's compliance with the Data Protection Act. Personal data must only be used to assist you to carry out your work; it must not be given to people who have no right to see it. All staff should maintain the security of all computerised databases of information on individuals, whether they are staff, pupils or members of the general public. Staff should refer any queries to the Principal.

2.3 GENERAL POINTS

1. Staff should display the highest possible standards of professional behaviour that is required in an educational establishment (see also Appendix 1).
2. Staff should be mindful that Gaelscoil an tSeanchaí is an Irish-medium school and that the main language of communication within the school is Irish. Staff are expected to continually improve their level of the language.
3. Staff should seek to co-operate with their colleagues, providing support, help and guidance as required by them and their line manager, and enable effective communication throughout the school.
4. Staff should not use their position in the school for private advantage or gain.
5. Staff should avoid words and deeds that might bring the school into disrepute or might undermine colleagues in the perception of others (staff/pupils/parents/community).
6. Staff should retain professional independent objectivity and not promote dogma or political bias to others in their working activities.
7. Staff should be aware of, and should follow school policies systems and procedures. They should normally communicate through the line management structure, and should ensure pupils do likewise.
8. Continuing professional development and support shall be provided by the school and, where appropriate and agreed, will be based on the objectives of the School Development Plan. Periodically, employees will be required to attend certain training activities.
9. Staff should attend their place of work punctually in accordance with their conditions of service and at the times agreed with their line manager. Those unable to avoid being late or absent should, whenever possible, give as much notice to the Principal so that alternative cover arrangements may be made. Text messages will not suffice.

2.4 ADMINISTRATIVE DUTIES

1. Teaching staff shall maintain and properly complete a register for all classes. The attendance register must be sent to the office before 9.30am every morning together with the dinner register.
2. In order to ensure safeguards both for staff and pupils, staff must obtain permission from the Principal:
 - before taking pupils off the school premises;

- before arranging for any visiting speakers;
- before incurring any expenditure on behalf of the school.

2.5 CONFIDENTIALITY

Staff shall maintain the appropriate levels of confidentiality with respect to student and staff records and other sensitive matters. They should take care not to discuss issues of particularly sensitive matters within the school community which could cause distress to school staff, pupils or parents.

2.6 WHEN IN DOUBT, ASK!

If any member of staff is in any doubt with regard to the guidelines of this Code, and how they apply in any particular situation, then please consult with the Principal. It is emphasised that this Code is intended to be a help and to enable fairness and equity between all staff.

APPENDIX 1

PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOUR

Professional behaviour is a generic term, but within this Code of Conduct includes such aspects as:

- acting in a fair, courteous and mature manner to pupils, colleagues and other stakeholders;
- co-operating and liaising with colleagues, as appropriate, to ensure pupils receive a coherent and comprehensive educational service;
- endeavouring to assist the school achieve its corporate and strategic objectives – in particular, by adopting a positive attitude to marketing and the achievement of quality and equality;
- respect for school property
- respect for the Irish language and culture
- maintaining the image of the school through standards of dress, general courtesy, correct use of school stationery, etc.
- taking responsibility for the behaviour and conduct of pupils in the classroom and sharing such responsibility elsewhere on the premises
- being fit for work (ie not adversely influenced by drugs, alcohol, etc.)
- being familiar with job requirements (eg proper preparation, use of suitable methods/systems, maintenance of appropriate/required records, etc), including keeping up-to-date with developments relevant to the job
- being familiar with communication channels and school procedures applicable to both pupils and staff
- ensuring all assessments/exams/tests are conducted in a fair and proper (prescribed) manner, and that procedures are strictly followed with respect to confidentiality and security
- respect for the rights and opinions of others.

This list is not exhaustive but the examples are given as a summary.

APPENDIX 2

DISCIPLINARY RULES

The following are examples of behaviour which the school finds unacceptable. The list is not exhaustive and it is acknowledged that it will be necessary to exercise judgement in all cases and to be fair and reasonable in all the circumstances.

1. Any form of physical/verbal violence towards pupils.
2. Physical violence, actual or threatened towards other staff or visitors to the school.
3. Sexual offences, sexual insults or sexual discrimination against pupils, other staff or visitors to the School.
4. Racial offences, racial insults or racial discrimination against pupils, other staff or visitors to the School.

5. Theft of school monies or property and of monies or property of colleagues or visitors to the school. Removal from school premises of property which is not normally taken away without the express authority of the Principal or of the owner of the property may be regarded as gross misconduct.
6. Deliberate falsification of documents such as time sheets, bonus sheets, subsistence and expense claims for the purpose of gain.
7. Acceptance of bribes or other corrupt financial practices.
8. Wilful damage of school property or of property belonging to other staff or visitors to the school.
9. Willful disregard of safety rules or policies affecting the safety of pupils, other staff or visitors to the school.
10. Any willful act which could result in actionable negligence for compensation against the school.
11. Refusal to comply with reasonable instructions given by staff with a supervisory responsibility.
12. Gross neglect of duties and responsibilities.
13. Unauthorised absence from work.
14. Being untruthful and/or engaging in deception in matters of importance within the school community.
15. Deliberate breaches of confidentiality particularly on sensitive matters.
16. Being incapable by reason of alcohol or drugs (not prescribed for a health problem) from fulfilling duties and responsibilities of employment.
17. Conduct which substantially brings the name of the school into disrepute or which seriously undermines confidence in the employee.

The following are examples of behaviour which could lead to formal disciplinary warnings.

1. Unsatisfactory timekeeping without permission.
2. Neglect of safety rules and procedures. Some offences of willful neglect may be regarded as gross misconduct.
3. Breaches of confidentiality. Deliberate breaches on sensitive matters maybe regarded as gross misconduct.
4. Failure to comply with reasonable work related requirements or lack of care in fulfilling the duties of the post.
5. Behaviour towards other employees, pupils, and visitors which gives justifiable offence. Certain behaviour giving rise to offence may be regarded as gross misconduct.
6. Acting in a manner which could reasonably be regarded as rude, impolite, contemptuous or lacking appropriate professional demeanour. In certain circumstances such behaviour may be regarded as gross misconduct.
7. Conduct which is not in keeping with the ethos of Gaelscoil an tSeanchaí.
7. Conduct which is considered as adversely affecting either the reputation of the school or affects confidence in the employee.

Certain conduct may be regarded as gross misconduct.

Staff must always be mindful of the fact that they hold a position of trust and that their behaviour towards the children in their charge must be above reproach. The Code of Conduct is not intended to discourage the positive interaction

between staff and pupils but to assist staff in respect of the complex issue of child abuse, by drawing attention to the areas of risk for staff and by offering guidance on appropriate conduct.

SAFEGUARDING: ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

All Adults

It is the responsibility of **ALL** adults working in the school to record and report possible or disclosed abuse to the Designated Teacher. It is the responsibility of all adults to:

- adopt safeguarding guidelines including the code of behaviour for staff
- act upon any concern, no matter how small it may seem, in accordance with the school's procedures
- promote safe practice and challenge poor and unsafe behaviour
- ensure all health and safety procedures are adhered to
- ensure they themselves are aware of safeguarding procedures and are appropriately trained

Private Meetings with Pupils

When confidential interviews are taking place, staff should:

- conduct such interviews in a room with visual access or with the door and blinds open, where such conditions cannot apply, staff are advised to ensure that another adult knows that the interview is taking place.
- not use a sign prohibiting entry to an interview room
- have another pupil or preferably another adult present or nearby during the interviews.

Guidance Principles For Staff

- Staff are advised not to make unnecessary physical contact with pupils.
- There may be occasions when a distressed child needs comfort and re-assurance which may include physical comforting such as a caring parent would give. You should use your discretion in such cases.
- Following any incident where you feel any of your actions may be misunderstood by a pupil, a written report of the incident should be submitted immediately to the Designated Teacher of the school. This would apply especially in a case where you had to restrain a child physically to prevent him/her from inflicting injury to others or self injury, from damaging property or committing a criminal offence.
- Where possible, avoid one to one contact with children in the following areas: toilets, classrooms, mobile classrooms, cars, minibuses and after school.
- Teachers should **never** invite pupils to their homes.
- Staff should, at all times, be mindful as to how they address pupils. When reprimanding bad behaviour or misdemeanours, remain aware of tone of voice, level of voice and invading personal space. Staff must not **under any circumstances** use corporal punishment against a child.
- If there is a problem about misbehaving and you need help to deal with the situation, bring the pupil(s) to the Principal/Vice Principal or send a responsible pupil to the office for the Principal/Vice Principal to come to you or use the internal telephone system to contact the office.
- If you have to administer First-Aid, you should ensure that wherever possible, other children or another adult are present if you are in any doubt as to whether necessary physical contact in the circumstances could be misunderstood. Use the internal phone system to contact the school office.
- Children requiring First Aid should normally be brought to the office. In the event of an injury to a child, ensure that it is recorded and witnessed by another adult. A record should be made in the Accident Record Book which complies with the Data Protection Act.

- No member of staff should hesitate to provide First Aid in an emergency.
- Do not make sexually suggestive comments about a child even in jest.
- Never keep suspicions of abuse or inappropriate behaviour by a colleague to yourself. If there is an attempted cover-up you could be implicated.
- Keep records of any false allegations a child makes against you or other staff, including 'You're always picking on me' or 'Don't touch me'. Keep records of dates and times. Get another adult to witness the allegation, if possible.
- If a child touches you or talks to you in a sexually inappropriate way, record what happened and tell another adult. As it could be totally innocent, do not make the child feel like a criminal.
- Do not spend excessive amounts of time alone with a child away from other people. If it is one-to-one, make sure the door is always open and tell another member of staff.
- If you take a child on a journey, always have a second person to accompany you.
- If you are in a holiday or residential setting, never, under any circumstances, take a child into your room. Always check rooms in pairs.
- Give firm guidelines on sexually inappropriate behaviour to the child. Explain that the behaviour is unacceptable and that it could get the child into difficulty, but do not make the child feel guilty as this behaviour may be an imitation of the abuse the child has suffered.
- When taking children on an outing, think of how you appear in public as your actions could be misunderstood.
- Be aware of how you touch children. Never pat children on the bottom.
- Be mindful of extended hugs and kisses from children. This is probably more relevant for people working with children who have special needs.
- Do not go to the toilet alone with children. Ensure the presence of a second adult. Never do anything of a personal nature that a child can do for themselves for example cleaning their bottom or any other activity that could be misinterpreted.
- When assisting a child with intimate care arrangements such as changing soiled clothes, a second adult should be present or close by. Please be sensitive to the child's needs and right to privacy on these occasions. Such incidents should be recorded and parents should be informed.
- When accompanying children to changing facilities, either in school or at other venues, staff will be sensitive to the child's right to privacy whilst ensuring that the child's safety and welfare is maintained. Staff will knock and give warning before entering the changing room of children of the same sex. However, this will also depend on the nature of the facility and will be left to the teacher's discretion. However, the children's safety is of paramount concern.
- During PE or sporting activities, physical contact will be kept to a minimum. Any contact will be in order to demonstrate techniques and keep children safe.

Choice and use of teaching materials

- Be aware of using teaching materials of a sensitive nature.
- If in doubt consult with the Principal.
- Be careful about videos shown in school. (Cert.12 and PG are not indicators of suitability.) Teachers should ask for parental consent.

Relationships and Attitudes

Staff should ensure that their relationships with pupils are appropriate to the age, maturity and sex of the pupils, taking care that their conduct does not give rise to comment or speculation. Attitudes, demeanour and language all require care and thought. Staff are aware that they are in a position of trust in relation to the children and young people at the school.

Communication with Pupils (including the use of Technology)

It is now recognised that e-safety risks are posed by behaviours and attitudes rather than by the technology itself. Adults must therefore ensure that they establish safe and responsible online behaviours. This means working to the school's acceptable user policy for adults which details the way in which new and emerging technologies may and may not be used and identifies sanctions for misuse.

Communication between pupils and adults, by whatever means, should take place within clear and explicit professional boundaries. This includes the wider use of technology such as mobile phone text messaging, emails, digital cameras, videos, webcams, websites and blogs. Adults should not share any personal information with a child or young person. They should not request, or respond to, any personal information from the child or young person, other than that which might be appropriate as part of their professional role. Adults should ensure that all communications are transparent and open to scrutiny.

Internal email systems should only be used in accordance with the school's policy.

This means that adults should:

- ensure that personal social networking sites are set at private and pupils are never listed as approved contacts
- not make reference to school and staff on social network sites
- never use or access social networking sites of pupils
- not give their personal contact details to pupils, including mobile numbers
- only use equipment e.g. cameras, provided by school for communication with pupils making sure that parents and senior management of the school have given permission for this form of communication to be used
- not use internet or electronic based communication channels to send personal messages to a child or young person

Supporting Vulnerable Children and Young people

At Gaelscoil an tSeanchaí we recognise that children who are abused or witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth.

They may feel helplessness, humiliation and some sense of blame. Our school may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. When at school their behaviour may be challenging or they may be withdrawn.

Gaelscoil an tSeanchaí will endeavour to support the pupils who are exposed to risk of harm through supporting such pupils in accordance with his/her agreed protection plan.

Support for all pupils in helping them develop skills in self protection and confidence will be afforded through:

- the content of the curriculum, particularly through Personal Development for Mutual Understanding
- the school ethos which promotes a positive supportive and secure environment and gives pupils a sense of being valued.
- the school behaviour policy which is aimed at supporting vulnerable pupils in the school. The school will ensure that pupils understand the difference between acceptable and unacceptable behaviours towards themselves and others
- liaison with other agencies that support the pupil such as Social Services, Education & Welfare Service, Educational Psychology, PSNI and the school nurse.

Safeguarding concerns about an adult working in the school

Where a concern is raised about possible child abuse by an adult working in the school, the Principal (or the DT if the Principal is unavailable) must be informed immediately. The above procedures will apply (unless the complaint is about the Designated Teacher or the Principal).

DRUGS EDUCATION POLICY

INTRODUCTION

In Gaelscoil an tSeanchaí we feel that Drugs Education is relevant and important. It is our responsibility to provide opportunities for the pupils to acquire the knowledge, understanding and skills to enable them to consider the effects of drugs on themselves and others, and to make informed and responsible choices within the context of a healthy lifestyle.

DEFINITION

For the purpose of this policy statement the term “drugs” will include any substance which, when taken, has the effect of altering the way the body works or the way a person behaves, feels, sees or thinks. As well as everyday substances such as tea and coffee, drugs include:

- alcohol and tobacco;
- “over-the-counter” medicines such as paracetamol;
- prescribed drugs such as antibiotics, tranquillisers, inhalers and ritalin;
- volatile substances, such as correcting fluids/thinners, gas lighter fuel, aerosols, glues and petrol;
- controlled drugs, such as cannabis, LSD, ecstasy, amphetamine sulphate (speed), magic mushrooms (processed), heroin and cocaine; and
- other substances such as amyl/butyl nitrate (poppers) and unprocessed magic mushrooms.

ETHOS

The school drugs policy is not considered in isolation from other curricular and pastoral policies, but reflects an integrated and consistent approach to the overall education and well-being of the children in Gaelscoil an tSeanchaí. Drugs Education is a whole curriculum issue and a key aim of our policy is to ensure that the key messages are reinforced in all aspects of school life. The policy aims to ensure that the procedures and programmes that are put in place are appropriate to the needs of the children, including those with special educational needs. It also reflects local circumstances as well as current knowledge and attitudes towards drugs.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The key aim of our policy is to ensure that the key messages about drugs education are reinforced in all aspects of school life.

Our objectives are:

- To promote positive attitudes towards personal health
- To inform pupils of the effect of 'drug' abuse
- To help pupils acquire decision-making skills
- To help pupils distinguish between useful and harmful drugs and consider their use, abuse, benefits and harm
- To help develop skills that will empower pupils to take responsibility for their own health and safety

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Role of the Staff

- Each member of staff has a key responsibility for the delivery of the Drugs Education programme within their own class
- If an incident arises the staff member should deal with any emergency procedures if necessary
- Any information, substance or paraphernalia received should be forwarded to Orlagh Uí Dheoráin
- A brief factual report of the suspected incident should be completed and forwarded to Orlagh Uí Dheoráin

The Role of the Designated Teacher

- Orlagh Uí Dheoráin is the Designated teacher for Drugs Education in Gaelscoil an tSeanchaí
- The duties of the designated teacher include the oversight and planning of curricular provision, in compliance with statutory requirements
- Orlagh Uí Dheoráin is also responsible for the co-ordination of the school's procedures for handling suspected drugs related incidents and the training and induction of these procedures with new and existing staff
- Orlagh Uí Dheoráin is the contact point for outside agencies working with the school in this area
- In the event of a suspected incident, Orlagh will complete a factual report and forward it to the principal

The Role of the Principal

- It is the role of the principal to determine the circumstances of all

incidents but it is the role of the P.S.N.I. to investigate any criminal offence

- In any suspected drugs related incident the principal will contact the parents/guardians of those pupils involved. The police will be contacted in any incident involving a controlled drug
- The principal is responsible for the welfare of the pupil(s) involved and the other pupils in the school
- The principal is responsible for the handling, storage and safe disposal of any drugs/drugs related paraphernalia
- In the event of a suspected incident, the principal will inform the Board of Governors, agreeing any appropriate pastoral /disciplinary response
- In the event of a suspected incident, the Principal will complete a written report forwarding a copy to EA

PROGRAMME

Our Drugs Education Programme aims to:

1. Introduce opportunities for pupils to enhance their self-respect, personal competence and self-esteem by encouraging the development of:
 - Positive attitudes and behaviours towards themselves and others
 - Skills and behaviours which enable them to communicate effectively and assert themselves
 - The ability to make responsible decisions, identify risks, help others, and cope with pressures and influences
2. Ensure continuity and progression in the knowledge, understanding, skills, attitudes and values being addressed.
3. Ensure that the content and teaching methods used are appropriate to the age, maturity and experiences of the pupil.

MANAGEMENT OF INCIDENTS

Individual Staff Member

- Assess the situation and decide action.
- Secure First Aid and send for additional staff support if necessary.
- Make situation safe for all pupils and other members of staff.
- Carefully gather up any drugs and/or associate paraphernalia/evidence however **never** search a pupil's bag or property without consent

- Pass all information/evidence to Orlagh Uí Dheoráin
- Write a brief factual report of the incident and forward it to Orlagh

Teacher Responsible

- Respond to first aider's advice/recommendations regarding the incident
- In the case of an emergency inform parents/guardians immediately
- Take possession of any substance(s) and associated paraphernalia found. Do not search pupil's bag or property without consent
- Inform principal
- Take initial responsibility for pupils involved in suspected incident
- Complete an incident report form and forward to principal

Principal

- Determine the circumstances surrounding the incident
- Ensure the following people are informed where relevant:
 - parents/guardians
 - Board of Governors
 - Designated officer in EA
- Agree pastoral and disciplinary responses including counselling services/support
- Forward a copy of the incident report form to the chairperson of the Board of Governors and EA
- Review procedures and amend if necessary

EMERGENCY FIRST AID PROCEDURES

If someone is in difficulty as a result of misusing drugs:

- It is important to find out what has been taken as this could affect emergency aid
- If the pupil has taken a depressant drug e.g. solvents, painkillers, alcohol, it is likely that they will be drowsy or unconscious. If the pupil is drowsy it is important to try to keep them awake – by getting them to walk, talking to them, or applying a cool damp towel to the back of their neck. They should not be given anything to eat or drink as this could lead to vomiting or choking
- If they become unconscious, put them into the recovery position, clear the airway, if blocked, loosen clothing and **CALL FOR AN AMBULANCE IMMEDIATELY**. Keep checking on any changes to pulse and breathing rates
- If they stop breathing begin mouth to mouth resuscitation. Stay

with the pupil until the ambulance crew arrive and then tell them all the facts

- If the pupil is panicking or showing signs of distress try to reassure them. It is important that they calm down and relax. Get them to breath in and out deeply and slowly
- If hyperventilation occurs get them to breath in and out of a paper bag

PROCEDURES SURROUNDING VISITORS TO THE SCHOOL

- All outside agencies must be vetted using the set procedure before coming into contact with children in the school
- It is important that staff are fully informed of the exact content of programmes being presented to pupils by outside agencies
- All outside agencies need to be aware of the policy and scheme used in Gaelscoil an tSeanchaí
- A teacher must always be present when a visitor is talking to or working with a group of children
- Outside agencies must be made aware that they cannot ensure confidentiality if a disclosure is made when working on school premises
- The outside agency should carry out an evaluation of their programme in the school

ADMINISTERING PRESCRIBED MEDICATION

We seek at all times to ensure the child's well-being. Therefore, there may be occasions when a child requires medication, which needs to be administered during the school day.

There are two categories to be considered:

1. Children who require emergency medication on a long-term basis because of the chronic nature of their illness e.g. asthma and epilepsy.
2. Children who are suffering from casual ailments e.g. coughs and colds.

RESPONSIBILITY

Parents are responsible for the administration of medicine to their children. If a child needs medicine at lunchtime the parent should come to school to administer the medicine. Staff may supervise the administration of medication during the school day only if it is absolutely necessary e.g. asthma medication. Staff are not obliged to dispense medicines; any involvement would be on a purely voluntary basis.

PROCEDURES

If a child requires medication, the parents must:

1. Fill out the chronic or short term medicines form.
2. Bring the medicines to the school in a properly labelled container which states the name of the medicine, the dosage and the time of administration.
3. Demonstrate to staff how to administer the medication.
4. Sign a consent form authorising staff to supervise the administration of medication.

STORAGE OF MEDICINES

Medicines will be stored in a secure place in each classroom in line with Health and Safety regulations.

MONITORING AND EVALUATING

It is recognised that the policy may have to be reviewed and amended if necessary in the event of a drugs related incident.

APPENDIX 1

GAELSCOIL AN tSEANCHAÍ

DRUGS INCIDENT REPORT FORM

FACTUAL ACCOUNT OF EVENTS

SIGNED _____

DATE _____

APPENDIX 2

ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICINES

GAELSCOIL AN tSEANCHAÍ

Pupil's Name _____

Pupil's Class _____

Medical Condition of son/daughter _____

Name Of medicine _____ Dosage _____

Times of administration each day: _____

Duration of course _____

Has your son/daughter taken this medicine before?

Yes / No (please delete)

If yes, have they ever had any allergic reaction to it?

Yes / No (please delete)

Should this medicine be stored in a fridge?

Yes / No (please delete)

I give the appropriate teachers in the school my permission to supervise the administration of the above named medicine to my son/daughter at the times specified above.

Please ensure that the medicine is clearly labelled with your son/daughter's name, class, name of medicine, dosage and times of

administration.

Signed _____ (Parent/Guardian)

Date _____

GP's contact telephone number _____

Please complete contact details on reverse side

ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICINES

GAELSCOIL AN tSEANCHAÍ

Contact Parent's Details

Name: _____

Daytime Telephone Number: _____

Daytime Address: _____

Second Contact Person's Details

Name: _____

Daytime Telephone Number: _____

Daytime Address: _____

APPENDIX 3

MEDICAL PLAN

GAELSCOIL AN tSEANCHAÍ

Pupil's name _____ Class _____

Date of birth _____

Condition _____

CONTACT INFORMATION

Contact Parent's Details

Name: _____

Daytime Telephone Number: _____

Daytime Address: _____

Second Contact Person's Details

Name: _____

Daytime Telephone Number: _____

Daytime Address: _____

Clinic / Hospital Contact

Name: _____

Phone Number: _____

G.P.

Name: _____

Phone Number: _____

DETAILS OF CONDITION

Describe conditions and give details of pupil's individual symptoms:

Daily care requirements:

Describe what constitutes an emergency for the pupil and the action to take if this occurs:

Follow up care:

Who is responsible in an emergency?:

SIGNED: _____ Parent/Guardian

_____ Teacher

_____ Principal

_____ Nurse/Doctor

APPENDIX 4

Finding a substance on the school premises

- Unknown substance found on the school premises
- Carefully lift it – do not taste it or handle with cut or scratched hands
- Bring substance and related paraphernalia to the Principal or the Designated Teacher for Drugs to be stored in secure place
- Hand the substance to the police for analysis –ensuring feedback

Record action taken

- Investigate how the substance came to be on the school premises
- Inform Adviser Drugs Education EA

Prepare a report for the

Board of Governors

APPENDIX 5

Pupil suspected of having taken drugs in school

NO

YES

Is pupil conscious

- Inform Principal/ Designated Teacher and First Aider
- Place him in the recovery position
- Stay with pupil and send someone to phone for an ambulance
- Try to find what substance has been taken and how much of it
- Inform the pupil's parents
- Try to find what substance has been taken and how much of it
- Administer First Aid, if appropriate

Does pupil need hospital treatment?

Yes/Possibly

NO

- Conduct the search procedures according to the school policy. Contact parents and send to hospital
- Inform the pupil's parents and designated Governor

- Contact the local PSNI
- Inform Adviser Drugs Education EA
- Write a detailed report of the incident including action taken

Decide on the disciplinary measures

- Inform the Board of Governors
- Arrange for counselling for the pupil

Reviewed: MF 2018

Renewal: 2019

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Signed: _____ Date: _____