

# SUNCROFT NATIONAL SCHOOL

**Policy Number: 17 - CHILD PROTECTION**

**REV:1**

## **Introduction:**

The policy was formulated by the Principal, the teachers, the parents and the Board of Management.

## **RATIONALE:**

We are writing this document because the profile of child abuse as a social problem has risen considerably in recent years. We acknowledge the importance of promoting the welfare and protection of children.

## **RELATIONSHIPS TO CHARACTERISTIC OF THE SCHOOL:**

Our school cherishes all pupils equally and endeavours to watch out for their well-being and ensure their safety.

## **AIMS:**

Our school hopes to provide the pupils with the highest possible standard of care, in order to promote their well-being and protect them from harm.

That all school personnel will observe changes in behaviour, failure to develop or outward signs of abuse and report such concerns in accordance with the National Guidelines for the protection and welfare of children.

## **GUIDELINES:**

Appointment of a Designated Liaison Person. The school Principal is the schools Designated Liaison Person (DLP) and has specific responsibility for Child Protection.

Roles and Responsibility. The Principal will liaise with the health boards, the Garda Siochana and other parties, in all dealings in connection with allegations of abuse. The other parties should be advised that they should conduct all matters pertaining to the processing or investigation of alleged child abuse through the Principal.

Where the Principal is unavailable for whatever reasons, the Vice Principal will assume her/his responsibilities.

The Designated Liaison Person, or his/her nominated replacement, should immediately inform the Chairperson of the Board of Management of the school that a report involving a pupil in the school, has been submitted to the South Western Area Health Board.

Categories of Child Abuse.

There are 4 categories of Child Abuse.

**Neglect, emotional abuse physical abuse and sexual abuse.**

A child may be subjected to one or more forms of abuse at any given time

- Definition of Neglect: (see Children 1<sup>st</sup> pg. 31)

- Signs and symptoms of Child abuse. (see Children 1<sup>st</sup> pg. 125-131)

- Reasonable Grounds for Concern. (see Children 1<sup>st</sup> pg. 38)

- Common Impediments to the Reporting of Child Abuse (see Children 1<sup>st</sup> pg. 40)

- Handling Disclosures from a Pupil. (D.E.S. Guidelines pg.9 or B.O.M. book pg.197)

- What may be required of school personnel if required to attend a child protection



- 
- Staff members include teachers, caretakers, S.N.A., and secretary.
- 
- There is an obligation on Suncroft N.S. to aim to provide pupils with the highest possible standard of care in order to promote their well-being and protect them for harm.
- 
- All school personnel are especially well placed to observe changes in behaviour, failure to develop or outward signs of abuse in the pupils attending. In a situation where school personnel suspect abuse, they should ensure that such concerns are reported in accordance with the procedures outlined in the B.O.M. handbook pg.198 paragraph 3.1.

b. Role of D.L.P. within the school.

- The D.L.P. should ensure that all staff members are familiar with the school policy of Child Protection.
- He/she should ensure that all relevant information is readily available to the staff and that any additional information is distributed to staff members.
- All material e.g.
  - R.S.E programme,
  - Stay Safe,
  - Prim-Ed Anti-Bullying kit,
  - Trinity College Anti-Bullying kit,
- should be available to staff.

The procedure for consultation with/reporting to the staff members and the D.L.P should be made known to all staff members i.e.

- ➞ If a school personnel receives an allegation or has a suspicion that a pupil is being abused, the school employee should, in the first instance, report the matter to the D.L.P. in the school. The need for confidentiality at all times, should be borne in mind.
- ➞ The D.L.P should provide the member of staff who has reported a disclosure or concern with follow-up information.;
- ➞ The D.L.P. should ensure that a record of all disclosures or concerns by staff are kept in a
  - ➞ secure place;
  - ➞ That copy of reports are kept;
  - ➞ That in the incident of a report being made to a Health Board, the time and date of the matter being reported to the Chairperson of the B.O.M., be noted;
  - ➞ That such follow-up correspondence be recorded and kept in a secure place;
  - ➞ That any new member of staff are informed of the schools procedure by having a copy of this policy being made available to them.

Procedures to be followed when managing a disclosure by a pupil.

Reported Concerns (see D.E.S. Guidelines chapter 3,4,5)

Role of D.L.P when liasing with the B.O.M. (see D.E.S. Guidelines chapter 2)

Role of D.L.P. when liaising with agencies outside school - Health board, Gardai etc.  
(see D.E.S. Guidelines chapter 3)

c. Role of the Board of Management

Duties of the B.O.M. where an allegation has been made against a school employee.  
(see D.E.S. chapter 4)

How does the B.O.M. ensure pupils safety? (see D.E.S. 4.3.3, 4.3.4 pg. 16-17)

Reporting to the Chairperson of the B.O.M. when a report is being made. (see D.E.S. chapter 3.2.1)

## **Organisational Implications.**

### Supervision.

The layout of our school building lends itself to visibility and adequate supervision. All visitors can be seen entering the school from either the front or the back. Caution must be taken not to let children go to the older side of the building alone as it is quite empty and could harbour an uninvited threat to the children.

### Attendance.

It is the schools policy to note absences and whether they are explained by a note or not. Partial attendance is also noted and requires a written explanation.

### Record Keeping.

D.E.S Guidelines chapter 2 pg. 9-10

Policy of pupils travelling in staff cars.

The child/children always sit in the back.  
Never carry a child alone.

Special Needs.

What measures can we put in place to ensure children with special needs for safety?  
Mobility/language.

Linkage with other Policies.

It is the intention that Suncroft N.S. Child Protection Policy should be seen to be actively enforced with the aid of the schools policy on:

- Code of Behaviour
- Stay Safe Programme
- Anti-Bullying Programme
- S.P.H.E. Programme

See pg.4 of the Policy Development Guidelines.

Curricular Implications.