

# **Chapter 1: Child Protection Policy**

## **1.1 Introductory Statement**

Catherine McAuley School seeks to help our pupils to grow and develop into healthy, confident, mature adults, capable of realising their full potential as human beings. We strive to create a happy, safe environment for the children, where they feel secure, knowing that if they have concerns, they will be listened to with understanding and respect and that their concerns will be acted on.

## **1.2 Rationale**

- 1.2.1 The Board of Management recognises that child protection and welfare considerations permeate all aspects of school life and must be reflected in each school policy, school practices and activities. The Board of Management, in accordance with the requirements of the Department of Education and Skills, Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools, has approved this Child Protection Policy.
- 1.2.2 The Board of Management also reaffirms its primary responsibility for the care and welfare of pupils and staff. As such the Board of Management will fully implement, without modification the Department of Education and Skills Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2011. These procedures will therefore underpin the content of this policy. To these ends, this document review is formulated in response to recent changes in Guidance and Procedures in relation to Child Protection matters and takes account of the provisions of each of the following important pieces of legislation:
- (a) Freedom of Information Act 1997
  - (b) The Education Act 1998
  - (c) The Child Welfare Act 2000
  - (d) Children First – National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2011.
  - (e) The Children First Act 2015
- 1.2.3 The procedures are based on the recently published *Children First – National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2011 and The Children First Act 2015 Appendix 11*.
- 1.2.4 The Board of Management, staff and representatives of parents of the school have redrafted and reviewed the following policy on \_\_\_\_\_ 2016. This policy is in line with the current guidance relating to child abuse prevention and child protection. The policy will also outline the responsibilities of the school in the following areas.
- (a) Prevention - Curricular Provision
  - (b) Procedures – Dealing with disclosures / concerns
  - (c) Practice – Best practice in Child Protection

1.2.5 An individual copy of this policy document and the appendices as outlined by the Children First Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2011 will be made available to all the staff. It is incumbent on all staff to familiarise themselves with “Children First” and the Department of Education Child Protection Guidelines and Procedures.

**References**

- *‘Children First’ (Department of Children and Youth Affairs 2011) & Children First Act 2015*
- *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools (Department of Education and Skills 2011)*

## **Chapter 2: Aims of Policy**

- 2.1 The agreed aims of this child protection policy are as follows:
- (a) To raise awareness of child protection guidance and procedures among all staff.
  - (b) To reinforce clear procedures for dealing with suspicions and allegations of abuse.
  - (c) To identify links to other policy areas which need to reflect Children Protection Guidance.
  - (d) To identify curricular content and resources that contribute to the prevention of child abuse and to educate children about reporting and preventing abuse.
  - (e) To ensure that all staff are aware of and familiar with the “Children First” – National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2011 in relation to reporting concerns and/ or disclosures of child abuse.
  - (f) To advise on staff training in this and related areas.
- 2.2 In its policies, practices and activities, Catherine McAuley School will adhere to the following principles of best practice in Child Protection and Welfare. Our school recognises that the protection and welfare of children is of paramount importance, regardless of all other considerations and will therefore;
- (a) Fully co-operate with the relevant statutory authorities in relation to child protection and welfare matters
  - (b) Adopt safe practices to minimise the possibility of harm or accidents happening to children and protect workers from the necessity to take unnecessary risks that may leave themselves open to accusations of abuse or neglect
  - (c) Develop a practice of openness with parents and encourage parental involvement in the education of their children
  - (d) Fully respect confidentiality requirements in dealing with child protection matters
  - (e) Adhere to the above principles in relation to any adult pupil with a special vulnerability
- 2.3 Specific policies named hereunder are key elements of this overall document and must be referred to in the context of this policy:
- |                       |                        |
|-----------------------|------------------------|
| (a) Attendance        | (g) ICT                |
| (b) Enrolment         | (h) Supervision        |
| (c) Code of Behaviour | (i) Special Ed         |
| (d) Bullying          | (j) Induction of Staff |
| (e) Health & Safety   | (k) Tours/Trips        |
| (f) Record Keeping    | (l) Critical Incidents |
- 2.4 This policy will also be considered with reference to the participation by pupils in sporting activities, other extra-curricular activities and school outings. Other practices and activities, where child protection might have particular relevance, will consider the procedures outlined within this policy. The Board has ensured that the necessary policies, protocols or practices as appropriate are in place in respect of each of the above listed items.
- 2.6 Availability: This policy is available to all school personnel and the Parent Association and is readily accessible to parents on request. It is also available in hard copy in each classroom. A copy of this policy is available for the attention of the DES and the patron if requested.

## **Chapter 3: Personnel**

3.1 The following key positions have been appointed and ratified by the Board of Management:

- (a) Designated Liaison Person (DLP) is Susan Goodwin.
- (b) Deputy Designated Liaison Person (Deputy DLP) is Jennifer McNamara.

3.1.1 In the absence of DLP and DDLP, the principal (Greg Browne) acts as DLP.

3.1.2 All staff have a general duty of care to ensure that arrangements are in place to protect children from harm.

### **3.2 Designated Liaison Person (DLP) \***

3.2.1 The Board of Management of Catherine McAuley School has appointed Ms Susan Goodwin as DLP. Ms Jennifer McNamara acts as Deputy DLP. Both teachers will undertake or have undertaken training from the Child Abuse Prevention Programme (CAPP), at the earliest opportunity. CAPP provides training to the whole school community (staff, parents and Boards of Management) on the stay Safe Programme.

3.2.2 The DLP has specific responsibility for Child Protection Procedures and will represent the school in all correspondence with the Health Service through The Child And Family Agency (TUSLA), an Garda Síochána and other parties in connection with allegations of abuse. All matters pertaining to child abuse concerns should be processed through the DLP (DES Procedures 3:2)

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

3.2.4 The position of DLP will be addressed at the first meeting of each new Board of Management. The DLP is currently a voluntary position as it is not filled by the Principal. However, the DLP will continue to act as such until such time as he/she is replaced by the BOM for whatever reason.

***\*See Appendix 8: Role of the DLP***

## **Chapter 4: Confidentiality**

- 4.1 All information regarding concerns of possible child abuse should only be shared on a 'need to know' basis in the interests of the child. The giving of information to those who need to have that information is not a breach of confidentiality. This procedure exists for the protection of a child who may have been or has been abused.
- 4.2 The DLP who is submitting a report to the Health Board or an Garda Síochána should inform a parent/guardian, unless doing so is likely to endanger the child or place that child at further risk. A decision not to inform a parent/guardian should be briefly recorded together with the reasons for not doing so.
- 4.3 In emergency situations, where the Health Board cannot be contacted, and the child appears to be at immediate and serious risk, an Garda Síochána should be contacted. A child should not be left in a dangerous situation where Agency (TUSLA) intervention is not forthcoming.
- 4.4 **Protection for Persons Reporting Child Abuse**
- 4.4.1 The protection for persons reporting Child Abuse Act 1998 provides immunity from civil liability to any person who reports a child protection concern 'reasonably and in good faith' to designated officers of TUSLA or any member of an Garda Síochána (DES Procedures 1:10)
- 4.5 **Qualified Privilege**
- 4.5.1 People making a report to the DLP in good faith have 'qualified privilege' under common law. Reports made to TUSLA may be subject to provisions of the Freedom of Information Act, 1997. This act enables members of the public to obtain access to personal information relating to them which is in the possession of public bodies. However, the act also provides that public bodies may refuse access to information obtained by them in confidence (DES Procedures 1:11)

## **Chapter 5: Definition and Recognition of Child Abuse**

5.1 Child abuse can be categorised into four different types:

- (a) Neglect\*
- (b) Emotional abuse
- (c) Physical abuse
- (d) Sexual abuse

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

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

### **5.2 Guidelines for Recognition of Child Abuse**

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

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

- 1. Considering the possibility
- 2. Looking out for signs of abuse
- 3. Recording of information

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

### **5.3 Handling Disclosures from Children**

5.3.1 The Department of Education and Skills Procedures 3:5 gives comprehensive details of how disclosures should be approached. Staff are advised to deal with each situation sensitively, reassure the child but not to make promises that cannot be fulfilled.

5.3.2 The adult should not ask leading questions or make suggestions. They should explain that further help may have to be sought. The discussion should then be recorded accurately.

5.3.3 Records should include reference to what was observed with sketches of physical injury where necessary. \*\* and should also record when the alleged incident took place. Records should be kept in a secure place. The information should then be conveyed to the school DLP.

5.3.4 If the reporting person and the DLP are satisfied that there are reasonable grounds for the suspicion/allegation, the procedures outlined in 'Children First' must be adhered to. Standardised reporting forms should be used (DES Procedures Appendix 4). The content of the report should follow the guidelines in 'Children First'

**\*\*See Appendices 4, 5 and 6**

## **Chapter 6: Allegations or Suspicions in relation to School Employees (DES Procedures Chapter 5)**

- 6.1 The Chairperson and the DLP are concerned with the protection of the children in their care in the first instance. However, employees must be protected against false and malicious claims. Due process must be observed in relation to allegations against employees. Legal advice should be sought by the Board of Management in relation to an allegation in relation to an employee. If the allegation is against the DLP, the Chairperson of the Board of Management will assume the responsibility for reporting the matter to the Health Service Executive Child And Family Agency (TUSLA).
- 6.2 **Reporting**
- 6.2.1 When an allegation of abuse is made against a school employee, the DLP should act in accordance with the procedures outlined in Children First.
- 6.2.2 A written statement of the allegation should be sought from the person/agency making the report. A parent/guardian may make a statement on behalf of a child. The DLP should always inform the Chairperson of the Board of Management and is responsible for liaising with TUSLA. The Chairperson assumes responsibility for dealing with the employee. *See Appendix 6*
- 6.2.3 School employees, other than the DLP, who receive allegations against another school employee, should immediately report the matter to the DLP. School employees who form suspicions regarding conduct of another school employee should consult with the DLP.
- 6.2.4 The employee should be informed by the Chairperson (Board of Management --- Employer) that:
- (a) An allegation has been made against him/her
  - (b) The nature of the allegation
  - (c) Whether or not the Health Board (TUSLA) or Gardaí has been informed.
- 6.2.5 The employee should be given a copy of the written allegation and any other relevant documentation.
- 6.2.6 The employee should be requested to respond to the allegation in writing to the Board of Management within a specified period and told that this may be passed to the Gardaí, TUSLA and legal advisers.
- 6.2.7 The Chairperson must take the necessary steps to protect the child and may consult the Board of Management in this matter. The Board of Management may direct that the employee take administrative leave with pay and avoid suspension, thus removing any implication of guilt. The DES should be immediately informed.

***See Appendix 6: Procedures for Board of Management and DLP in cases of allegations or suspicions of child abuse by a school employee.***

## **Chapter 7: School Measures Taken to Protect the Children in Our Care**

- 7.1 There are a number of areas where common sense in our school should prevail in order to protect the children in the school and the staff who care for them. In relation to this, certain points should be noted:
- 7.1.1 Catherine McAuley School shall fully implement the Stay Safe programme
  - 7.1.2 A copy of the school's child protection policy, which includes the names of the Designated Liaison Person (DLP) and Deputy DLP, will be made available to all school personnel and the Parents' Association and is readily accessible to parents on request.
  - 7.1.3 The name of the DLP and other relevant support services are displayed in a prominent position near the main entrance to the school.
  - 7.1.4 In addition to informing the school authority of those cases where a report involving a child in the school has been submitted to the TUSLA Agency, the DLP shall also inform the school authority of cases where the DLP sought advice from TUSLA Agency and as a result of this advice, no report was made. At each Board of Management meeting, the Principal's Report shall include the number of all such cases and this shall be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.
  - 7.1.5 Catherine McAuley School will undertake an annual review \* of its Child Protection Policy and its implementation by the school. A checklist, to be used in undertaking the review (included at **Appendix 1**). The school has put in place an action plan to address any areas for improvement which might be identified in the annual review.
  - 7.1.6 The Board of Management shall make arrangements to inform school personnel that the review has been undertaken.
  - 7.1.7 Written notification that the review has been undertaken shall be provided to the Parent Association. A record of the review and its outcome shall be made available, if requested, to the patron and the Department of Education and Skills. \*See Appendix 10

## **Chapter 8: Child Protection Practices**

- 8.1 The staff and Board of Management of this school have identified the following as areas of specific concern in relation to Child Protection.
- 8.1.1 Following discussion and consultation, the staff and Board of Management have agreed that the following practices be adopted:
- Physical contact between school personnel and the child should always be in response to the needs of the child and not the needs of the adult
- 8.1.2 While physical contact may be used to comfort, reassure or assist a child, the following should be factors in determining its appropriateness:
- It is acceptable to the child
  - It is open and not secretive
  - The age and developmental stage of the child
- 8.2 School personnel should avoid doing anything of a personal nature for children, that they can do for themselves.
- 8.3 School personnel should never engage in or allow:
- The use of inappropriate language or behaviours
  - Physical punishment of any kind
  - Sexually provocative games or suggestive comments about or to a child
  - The use of sexually explicit or pornographic material
- 8.4 All media products (CDs, DVDs etc.) should be checked for their appropriateness with regard to age and suitability.
- 8.5 In accordance with the Children First and the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools, all incidents involving explicit images of children will be referred to the Gardai and to TUSLA – Child and Family Agency.

## **Chapter 9: The Nature Of Working With Pupils With MGLD**

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

9.2 In Class: All staff will observe the following guidelines:

9.2.1 No staff member will be alone with a pupil in an isolated or non-visible part of the school.

9.2.2 Staff will take due notice of pupils who may have to leave the classroom for whatever reason. A corridor pass system will be employed.

9.2.3 No child or class will be left unattended for any length of time.

9.2.4 Parents/ Guardians and the Gardaí, when necessary, will be informed immediately if a pupil leaves the class or the school without permission and refuses to return.

9.3 One-to-one: All staff will observe the following guidelines:

9.3.1 It is the policy in this school that occasionally one-to-one teaching is often in the best interests of the child.

9.3.2 Every effort will be made to ensure that this teaching takes place in an open environment. This includes the quiet rooms, glass rooms. In the case of using these rooms the blinds should remain up / open and the door should be left open.

9.3.3 Parents of children who are to be involved in one-to-one teaching will be informed and their agreement sought.

9.3.4 Work being carried out by Special Needs Assistants (if allocated) will be carried out under the direction of the class teacher in an open environment.

9.3.5 It is also important that staff ensure they avoid any circumstance where they are alone with a pupil, or where a pupil could misconstrue an action on the part of a staff member.

With this in mind:

9.4.1 Staff will make every effort not be alone in a classroom with one child or detain a child on their own after school.

- 9.4.2 As the schools caters for pupils with special needs and where assistance is sanctioned on an individual basis, it is school policy that staff in such a situation should work with the classroom door open, thus rendering the occupants visible at all times.
- 9.4.3 When possible children should work in groups.
- 9.4.4 Children with physical disabilities who may require assistance in toileting will be aided by two Special Needs Assistants who have met the necessary screening and training requirements when being employed by the school.
- 9.4.5 Staff who take classes to swimming / games will make sure that there are two adults in attendance at all times. The dressing rooms and/or pool area should be well supervised.

## **9.5 Children with specific toileting/intimate care needs**

- 9.5.1 In all situations where a pupil needs assistance with toileting/intimate care, a meeting will be convened, after enrolment and before the child starts school, between parents/guardians, class teacher, special needs assistant, Principal and if appropriate the pupil. The purpose of the meeting will be to ascertain the specific needs of the child and to determine how the school can best meet those needs.
- 9.5.2 The staff to be involved in this care will be identified and provision will be made for occasions when the particular staff involved are absent. A written copy of what has been agreed will be made and kept in the child's file.
- 9.5.3 Two members of staff will be present when dealing with intimate care/toileting needs. Any deviation from the agreed procedure will be recorded and notified to the DLP and the parents/guardians.

## **9.6 Toileting accidents**

- 9.6.1 Clean underwear and suitable clothing will be kept in the school so that if a pupil has an 'accident' of this nature, they will in the first instance be offered fresh clothing into which they can change.
- 9.6.2 If the pupil for whatever reason cannot clean or change themselves and the parents/guardians cannot be contacted, the child will be assisted by members of staff familiar to the child. In all such situations, two members of staff should be present. A record of all such incidents will be kept and Principal and parents will be notified.

### **9.7 Accidents**

- 9.7.1 While every precaution will be taken under our Health and Safety Statement to ensure the safety of all our pupils, we realise that accidents will happen.
- 9.7.2 Accidents will be noted in our incident book and will be addressed under our accident policy as part of Health and Safety policy. Parents / guardians will be notified of accidents. If hospitalisation is required a staff member will accompany the pupil to hospital and remain with him/her until parents/guardians arrive.

### **9.8 Swimming / PE**

- 9.8.1 Children will be brought by bus to the swimming pool. Children will line up in an orderly manner for the bus as stated in our dismissal policy as part of Health and Safety. Teachers and SNAs will assist with supervision in the changing room in order to ensure children's safety.
- 9.8.2 All adults will act in 'loco parentis', and as such will endeavour to ensure that children return to school as dry as possible. Teachers and SNAs will be briefed around our swimming procedures. A minimum of two staff will be assigned to each dressing room.

### **9.9 Changing/Dressing for games/PE/Swimming**

- 9.9.1 Where pupils are expected to dress and undress themselves for Games/PE/Swimming and assistance is needed, this will be done in the communal area and with the consent of parents.
- 9.9.2 Under no circumstances will members of staff be expected to or allowed to dress/undress a child unsupervised in a cubicle/private area. In such situations where privacy is required, the parents/guardians of the child may be asked to assist the child.
- 9.9.3 Catherine McAuley School will endeavour to have two male member of staff in the male changing area and two female members of staff in the female changing area.
- 9.9.4 It is envisaged that pupils would wear a designated school tracksuit, with elasticated waist band and pullover top, to activities, PE classes and Swimming. Thereby removing the need for assistance with dressing.
- 9.9.5 In the case of a pupil who requires assistance with dressing, written permission will be sought from the pupil's parents/guardians and a named individual will be responsible for helping the pupil with dressing.

### **9.10 Movement of pupils within the school**

Pupils will be accompanied at all times by teachers /SNAs. Pupils should carry a hall pass when out of class for any reason.

### **9.11 Volunteers**

- 9.11.1 The Board of Management of Catherine McAuley School has requested that volunteers (eg: third level students on placements, volunteers from the community) be Garda vetted in line with recent Department of Education Circulars.
- 9.11.2 It should be noted that the process of Garda vetting can take a number of months. In the interim, a Volunteer Form approved by the CPSMA may be in use.
- 9.11.3 At all times there must be adequate supervision of pupils. While every effort will be made to adhere to best practice as agreed and outlined above, in the event of an emergency where this is not possible or practicable, a full record of the incident should be made and reported to the Principal and parents.

### **9.12 Visitors/Guest Speakers**

- 9.12.1 It is the policy of Catherine McAuley school that all visitors report at reception, from where their business in the school will be dealt with initially. All visitors will sign in the log book of persons entering and leaving the school and they will also receive a visitors pass badge, Teachers on yard duty will be aware of visitors entering the school yard. The teacher will ascertain their intentions and direct them to reception. Visitors, when applicable will be supervised in the discharge of their business.
- 9.12.2 Appropriately appointed and screened visiting teachers of varying disciplines, engaged by the Board of Management of Catherine McAuley School to perform specific duties, may work with a class alone at the Principal's discretion
- 9.12.3 Visitors/Guest speakers should never be left alone with pupils. The school (Principal/ teachers) has a responsibility to check out the credentials of the visitor/guest speaker and to ensure that the material in use is appropriate. The information imparted by the Guest Speaker will be approved by the class teacher prior to the visit. The teacher will remain in the classroom throughout the delivery.

### **9.13 Attendance (See Attendance policy)**

- 9.13.1 Our school attendance will be monitored as per our attendance policy. In accordance with the Rules for Primary Schools, the roll will be taken each morning. The school will comply with the regulations of the National Educational Welfare Board regarding absenteeism. With regards to child protection, we will pay particular attention to trends in non-attendance. We will also monitor non-attendance in correlation with signs of neglect/physical/emotional abuse.

#### **9.14 Behaviour**

- 9.14.1 Children are encouraged at all times to play co-operatively and inappropriate behaviour will be addressed under our Code of Behaviour. If an incident occurs which we consider to be of a sexualised nature, or is deemed to be as a result of abuse or neglect, this will be notified to the DLP who will record it and respond to it appropriately

#### **9.15 Bullying**

- 9.15.1 Bullying behaviour will be addressed under our Anti-Bullying policy. If the behaviour involved is of a sexualised nature or regarded as being particularly abusive then the matter will be referred to the DLP and class teacher.

#### **9.16 Children travelling in staff cars**

- 9.16.1 Members of the school staff will not carry children alone in their cars at any time. No pupil will sit in the front passenger seat if a place is available in the back seat. A minimum of two staff will travel on buses carrying students to school – related activities

#### **9.17 Communication**

- 9.17.1 Every effort will be made to enhance pupil-teacher communication. If pupils have concerns they will be listened to sympathetically. The SPHE/Oral Language/RE/RSE programmes allow for open pupil-teacher communication, which is hoped will aid the pupil-teacher relationship. Pupils will be taught how to communicate difficulties and anxieties they may be experiencing through the SPHE programmes. If teachers have to communicate with pupils on a one-to-one basis, they are requested to leave the classroom door open or request a colleague to attend. Further details on communications are found in the school's Communication Policy.

#### **9.18 Induction of Staff**

- 9.18.1 The DLP will be responsible for informing all new teachers and ancillary staff of the Child Protection Procedures (DES, 2011) and Children First Guidelines (2011), but particularly the recently published Children First – National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children (2011). All new teachers are expected to teach the appropriate SPHE objectives for their class.
- 9.18.2 The school is responsible for the mentoring of new teachers and will be responsible for supporting new teachers as they implement the SPHE objectives. The school is also responsible for ensuring that new teachers know how to fill in the roll book correctly and informing the teacher of record keeping procedures within the school. Information packs will be given to temporary / substitute staff.

### **9.19 Induction of Pupils**

- 9.19.1 All parents and children will be made aware of attendance rules and their implications as laid down in the Education Welfare Act (2000). All parents will be informed of the programmes in place in the school that deal with personal development e.g. RSE, Walk Tall, Stay Safe and SPHE.
- 9.19.2 All new parents will be given a copy of the school's enrolment policy, which outlines the procedures parents and children should use when contacting the school if there are absences or concerns of an educational/personal/family matter.
- 9.19.3 Parents are encouraged to make an appointment with the class teacher/principal if they wish to discuss their child's progress. All parents will be given a copy of the school's Code of Behaviour and Anti-Bullying policies.

### **9.20 Internet Safety/ Use of IT and other Electronic Devices** *(See IT and Behaviour Policies)*

- 9.20.1 The staff will be aware of the inherent dangers and possibilities of misuse of technology. Unsupervised use of the internet is forbidden.
- 9.20.2 The possession of mobile phones and any other electronic devices that can record is also not allowed in school or for any school related activity outside of the school premises unless a written request from parents is received for a genuine reason or approved of by the school.
- 9.20.2 It is the intention of the Principal and Staff at Catherine McAuley School to ensure that child protection concerns will be addressed in the school's Acceptable Use Policy as part of its Information and Communication Technology policy.
- 9.20.2 The Stay Safe lessons in each classroom may be supplemented with appropriate resources. There will also be annual meetings during which parents will be invited to attend a session with an invited speaker to stay abreast of the ever-changing situation regarding internet access.
- 9.20.3 In accordance with the Children First and the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools, all incidents involving explicit images of children will be referred to the Gardaí and to TUSLA – Child and Family Agency.

### **9.21 Record Keeping**

- 9.21.1 Teachers will keep records on each child's reports using Catherine McAuley Record Keeping Sheets. These records are kept by the teacher.
- 9.21.2 Roll books will be updated daily.
- 9.21.3 Sensitive information regarding children will be shared on a need-to-know basis.
- 9.21.4 All educational files of pupils who no longer attend this school are kept in the filing cabinet in the office. Further details on record keeping will be found in the school's Record Keeping Policy.

(See Appendix 4,5,6 for sample Child Protection Teacher Records)

## **9.22 Supervision**

- 9.22.1 The school supervision policy will be followed by all staff to ensure that there is comprehensive supervision of children at all breaks and before school. The school assumes responsibility for the students from 9 a.m. 20 minutes before the official start of the school day.
- 9.22.2 A rota for all supervision times will be displayed, with individual copies given to all staff members.
- 9.22.3 The school will ensure that all pupils safely board the buses at the end of the school day and that parents are notified of any changes.
- 9.22.4 Parents will be asked to inform the school of any change of dismissal that they are seeking also. (See Supervision Policy for agreed rules around break-times and procedures around teacher absences)

## **9.23 Visibility**

- 9.23.1 Teachers will ensure that children remain in areas where they are fully visible in the school yard. Pupils will not be allowed to spend time in any part of the school premises where they are not supervised by an adult.
- 9.23.2 Pupils are not allowed re-enter the school buildings at break times or other times, unless supervised by a staff member.
- 9.23.3 Pupils will enter school grounds directly from the buses in the morning.
- 9.23.4 Pupils are not to leave the school yard or engage with adults who are outside of the school yard.

## **Chapter 10: Child Protection Addressed in the School Curriculum**

- 10.1 In fulfilling the general aims of the Curriculum for Pupils with Mild General Learning Disabilities, the Revised Primary Curriculum, recognized Post Primary programmes and Social and Health Education Programmes, we the collective school community and Board of Management of Catherine McAuley School will:
- (a) Enable the child to live as full a life as a child and to realize his or her potential.
  - (b) Enable the child to develop as a social being through living and co-operating with others and so contribute to the good of society.
  - (c) Prepare the child for further education and lifelong learning.
- 10.2 In endeavoring to realize these aims we will create a positive school climate which is open, inclusive, respectful, fair, democratic and tolerant and which seeks to support the holistic development of all our children.
- 10.3 The strategies we will use to create this environment are detailed in our SPHE Plan and will involve:
- (a) Creating a health-promoting environment
  - (b) Enhancing self esteem
  - (c) Fostering respect for diversity
  - (d) Building effective communication within the school
  - (e) Developing appropriate home – school communication
  - (f) Catering for individual needs
  - (g) Developing democratic process
  - (h) Fostering inclusive and respectful language
- 10.4 We strive to ensure that our school will be physically and emotionally safe and we will deliver the curricular content of our SPHE programme with a view to giving our children the protective skills of self-esteem and assertiveness.
- 10.5 The circle time methodology will be used on a whole school basis. Co-operative interpersonal skills will be developed through working in pairs and working in groups.
- 10.6 Older children will be encouraged to work positively with conflict and negotiation and consensus building skills will be developed.

## 10.7 Junior Classes

10.7.1 Junior classes will teach content objectives as laid out under the ten strand units in our SPHE programme.

### 10.7.2 *Content Objectives*

Self Esteem / Identity	Making Decisions
Growing and Changing	Myself and my family / friends
New Life	Relating to others
Keeping Safe	Sharing and co-operating
Feelings and Emotions	Resolving Conflict

## 10.8 Middle Classes

10.8.1 Our SPHE programme will again be implemented according to the ten strand units. Knowledge, skills and attitudes developed in previous classes will be built on.

10.8.2 Children will be enabled to develop intra-personal skills and interpersonal skills. They will be encouraged to develop self-protection skills pertaining to smoking and alcohol.

10.8.3 Peer pressure and the influence of the media will also be examined.

10.8.4 The development of self esteem, esteem for others, assertiveness, awareness of feelings and skills around self-protection and disclosure will underpin our teaching.

10.8.5 *Content objectives:*

Self Esteem
Developing and expressing self confidence
Growing and Changing
Birth and New Life
Personal hygiene / safety
Making Decisions

10.8.5 Our SPHE programme will be supported by the use of Walk Tall resources, Prim – Ed anti-bullying materials, RSE materials (including Freedom) and Stay Safe materials.

## 10.9 Senior Classes

- 10.9.1 Our SPHE programme will again be implemented according to the ten strand units. Knowledge, skills and attitudes developed in previous classes will be built on.
- 10.9.2 Pupils will continue to develop self – awareness and positive attitudes towards themselves, others, their environment and the wider world in which they live.
- 10.9.3 Self - protection and respect for others will be fostered, decision making skills developed, peer influence and media bias examined. Knowledge of drugs and positive attitudes to drug use will be further developed.
- 10.9.4 Children will be enabled to develop good group – building skills, anti – bullying awareness and conflict resolution skills. Self – protection will be emphasized and protection of younger, less able people.
- 10.9.5 Positive attitudes to sexuality will be developed and respect for self and others fostered. (RSE Policy)

### 10.9.6 Content Objectives:

Accepting Myself	Parenthood
Developing and expressing	Feelings and Emotions
Self – confidence	Personal Hygiene
Physical development	Personal Safety
Becoming an adult	Making Decisions

- 10.9.7 The SPHE programme will be supported by the use of the Walk Tall materials, RSE Resources (Freedom), Stay Safe Resources, HSE resources and making the Links programme.
- 10.9.8 Skills and attitudes developed in previous classes will be built on. Pupils will be enabled to develop intra – personal skills and interpersonal skills. As children mature they will be challenged to develop their decision making skills. They will be encouraged to develop self – protection skills pertaining to smoking, alcohol and drugs.
- 10.9.9 Peer pressure and the influence of the media will also be examined. The development of self – esteem, esteem for others, assertiveness, awareness of feelings, and skills around self - protection and disclosure will underpin our teaching.
- 10.9.10 Our SPHE programme will be supported by the use of our RE programmes, Walk Tall resources, Prim – Ed anti – bullying materials, RSE materials and the Stay Safe programme.

**10.10 JCSP / JC / QQI and LCA**

10.10.1 Our SPHE programme will be implemented according to the curricular objectives as laid out under the ten strands in the SPHE and RSE Revised Primary Curriculum. It will also be covered in the social, personal and health and RSE sections of the post primary programmes that are taught in our school.

**10.11 Relationship and Sexuality Education (RSE)**

10.11.1 Catherine McAuley school has long recognized the need for an appropriate education for our pupils in relationships and sexuality. To this end, some years ago a programme was devised called “FREEDOM”, which is based on all available resources and is mindful of the learning needs of our pupils.

10.11.2 The school has and will continue to deliver this programme on a yearly basis, at the appropriate level for each pupil. When funding has permitted, the delivery of this programme has been carried out in conjunction with an educational psychologist.

## **Chapter 11: Success Criteria**

We will evaluate the success of this policy using the following criteria:

### ***11.1 Effective Child Protection***

- (a) Use of correct procedures by staff
- (b) Full awareness of staff of policy procedures
- (c) Full awareness and understanding of staff that they have a responsibility to listen to children and record and report any abuse related information, they receive, to the DLP
- (d) Assessment of these procedures by participants following a child protection case

### ***11.2 Curricular Effectiveness***

- (a) Delivery and participation by all staff in training
- (b) Delivery of the SPHE curriculum
- (c) Resources to support the delivery of the SPHE curriculum

### ***11.3 Feedback***

- (a) Assessment of all childcare issues as they arise in school
- (b) Assessment of safety procedures in school when incidents occur
- (c) Assessment of the policy procedures by participants following a child protection case

### **11.4 Timeframe for Implementation**

These procedures are implemented on a daily basis and following ratification by the Board of Management, this will continue.

### **11.5 Timeframe for Review\***

11.5.1 At the first staff meeting of every year, the DLP will remind all teachers of the guidance given in the Children First documents. The DLP will also alert staff to chapters 3, 4 and Appendix 1 of said document. Copies will be made available to those members of staff who require them.

11.5.2 A review will be conducted based on the criteria above and following any and all incidents where and when Children First Guidance and this policy's appendices are used.

\*See Appendix 10

### **11.6 Responsibility for Review**

- (a) The Board of Management
- (b) Principal
- (c) Designated Liaison Person
- (d) Staff

**11.7 Ratification and Communication**

11.7.2 This policy was first ratified on June 2008, amended in December 2010 and amended further in May 2016.

11.7.2 Parents will be notified of its existence and will be invited to read and comment on the policy. It will be available to view on the school website and in the school itself.

**Ratification of Child Protection Policy**

This policy will be reviewed by the Board of Management once in every school year.

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Chairperson of Board of Management

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Principal

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of next review: September 2017

The Board further endorses Susan Goodwin as the school DLP and Jennifer McNamara as Deputy DLP (DDL P) and Greg Browne as acting DDL P in the absence of the DDL P

On behalf of the Board of Management:

\_\_\_\_\_ (Chairperson) Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Appendices

**Appendix 1:Letter to Parents / Guardians**

Dear Parents/Guardians,

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

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

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

The Board of Management of Catherine McAuley School has adopted these guidelines as school policy. The revised school policy is available on [www.cmcauley.ie](http://www.cmcauley.ie).

Consequently, if school staff suspect or are alerted to possible child abuse, they are obliged to refer this matter to the TUSLA – Child and Family Agency under the Health Service Executive (HSE). The Agency will then assess the situation and provide support for the child concerned.

Children First, the National Guidelines for the Protection of Children may be assessed on the website of the Department of Children and Youth Affairs.([www.dcyf.ie](http://www.dcyf.ie)) and the Department of Education and Skills Child Protection Procedures can be read on the Department's website ([www.education.ie](http://www.education.ie)).

Alternatively, parents/guardians are also welcome to look through the guidelines here at the school.

Yours sincerely,

Principal

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**Appendix 2 : Child Protection Contacts**

**Designated Liaison Person: Susan Goodwin**

**Deputy DLP: Jennifer McNamara**

**Garda Station Telephone: 061212400**

**Local Contact For ‘The Children and Family Social Services of the HSE’**

**Social Work Department (Limerick East)**

Unit 3 St. Camillus Hospital Limerick Tel: (061) 483 711

**Social Work Department (Limerick West)**

Unit 3, St. Camillus Hospital Limerick Tel: (061) 483 996

**Adoption Services**

Parkbeg House, 2 Elm Drive, Caherdavin Lawn, Ennis Road Tel: (061) 206 988

**Clare Duty Social Work Team**

**Address** River House, Gort Road, Ennis, Co. Clare.

**Phone** 065 6863935

**Office Hours** 9am - 5pm

**Limerick Duty Social Work Team**

**Ballynanty**

**Address** Child and Family Agency Ballynanty Health Centre,  
Child Protection and Welfare, Ballynanty, Limerick.

**Phone** 061 457102

**Office Hours** 2pm - 5pm

**Newcastle West**

**Address** Child and Family Agency, Newcastle West Health  
Centre, Child Protection and Welfare, Health Centre,  
Newcastle West, Co. Limerick.

**Phone** 069 66653

**Office Hours** 2pm - 5pm

**South Hill**

**Address** Child and Family Agency, South Hill Health Centre,  
Child Protection and Welfare, Southhill, Limerick.

**Phone** 061 209985

**Office Hours** 2pm - 5pm

**Catherine McAuley School : May 11<sup>th</sup> 2016**

**Old Clare Street**

**Address** Child and Family Agency, Roxtown Health Centre,  
Child Protection and Welfare, Old Clare St, Limerick  
**Phone** 061 483091  
**Office Hours** 2pm - 5pm

**Tipperary Duty Social Work Team**

**North**

**Address** Child and Family Agency, Duty and Intake Social  
Work Department, Civic Offices, Limerick Rd,  
Nenagh, Co. Tipperary.  
**Phone** 067 46660  
**Office Hours** 9am - 5pm

**South**

**Address** Child and Family Agency, Social Work Team, South  
Tipperary Community Care Services, Western Rd,  
Clonmel, Co. Tipperary.  
**Phone** 052 6177303  
**Office Hours** 9am - 5pm

**Appendix 3: Helpline Numbers**

**National Adult Counselling Service: 1800 477477**

**INTO Employee Assistance 1800 411057**

**One In Four 016624070**

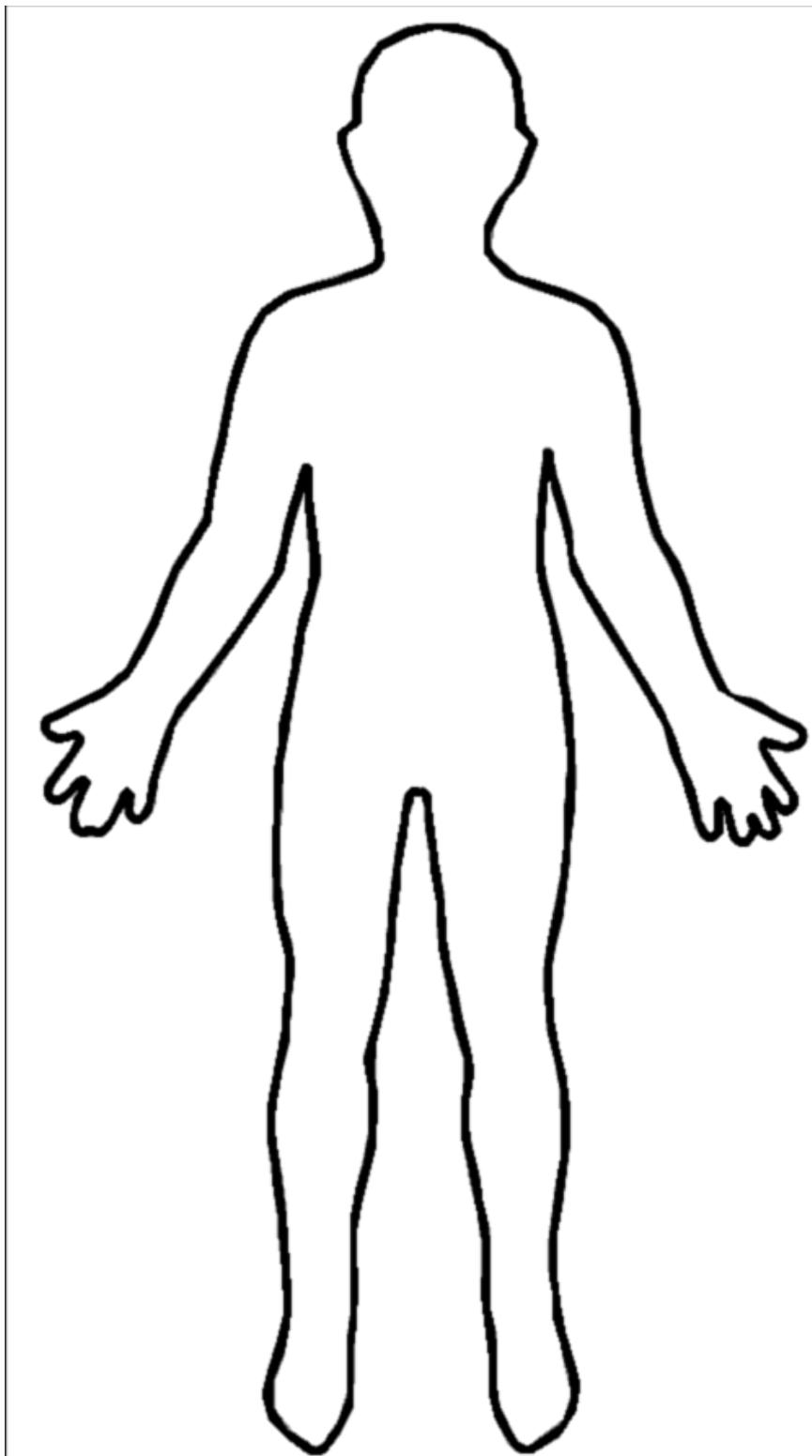
**Rape Crisis Centre: 1800 778888**

**Appendix 4: Teacher Record Form**

<b>TEACHER</b>		
<b>CODE</b>		
<b>Date</b>	<b>Observation</b>	<b>Signed</b>

Appendix 5

Code:	Date:
Indicate signs of injury, if necessary, on outline below	



SIGNED: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

**Appendix 6: Monitoring Suggestions** (Professional Development Service for Teachers, PDST)

Teachers are the only professionals who are in regular day to day contact with school-aged children and, because of that, we have a key role in situations where there are suspicions that a child is being abused. When there are such concerns, it is essential to keep an objective and factual record of all the information available. (DES Procedures, p. 21/22, paragraph 3.6) We may also be requested, following a child protection conference, to keep a child under observation in a manner that is not inconsistent with our existing duties (DES Guidelines, p. 28, paragraph 4.5.7). This hand-out has been created to assist teachers in this regard.

**Useful hint: Enter your observations under the various headings as appropriate. This will help to categorise your observations and enable you to note an emerging pattern or a deteriorating situation.**

<b>Possible Areas for Monitoring</b>	<b>Best Practice Suggestions</b>
Name of School Using agreed record form ensure school standard is applied	Record observations using code to protect anonymity of child. Keep in secure place Strictly confidential
Attendance and Punctuality Dates and times are important, since patterns or absence or lateness can be very revealing. If late, note if brought to school by parent/ carer/older sibling and record any explanation offered	Remember to sign and date each entry
Appearance, Hygiene and Care Record observations of the child's appearance, for example, poor hygiene, inappropriate clothing, no lunch	Record observations in chronological order
Physical Injury Give detailed description including, in the child's or carer's own words, if any explanation is offered	Include sketch of injury, if appropriate
Child's Behaviour A child may become increasingly aggressive, tense, unresponsive or show other signs of distress. Any sexualised behaviour should be noted.	Describe what you have observed factually
Child's Language The child may not have the language/be afraid to verbalise clearly what is happening. They may however drop hints or refer to what is happening obliquely.	Record child's exact words, not the adult equivalents
Child's Drawings, Writing or Play A young child may show few signs of abuse when he/she experiences a sense of security in a busy, structured classroom setting therefore careful observation of the child in less formal or unstructured settings are important. Always include the context in your record eg "when returning from the PE Room", "during small break", "when lining up for home time.	Remember context can be very important
Mood Changes Child may, for example, become quiet and tense towards end of day or if collected by a certain adult. This might also happen on certain days or before or after certain activities. Again, remember to include the context in your recording	Note time, context and situation –facts only

Remember monitoring should be systematic, continuous and requires perseverance

**Appendix 7: Procedures for Board of Management and DLP in cases of allegations or suspicions of child abuse by a school employee.**

**REPORTING**

***In the event of receiving a complaint or suspicion regarding an employee:***

The DLP will immediately inform the Chairperson of the Board of Management.

The Chairperson will immediately seek a written statement of the allegation from the person / agency making the allegation. Parents / Guardians may make a statement on behalf of a child.

The DLP will seek advice from the relevant HSE / Garda personnel and will take responsibility for reporting based on this advice.

If the DLP, following consultation with the HSE / Garda, decides that the matter is not for reporting, s/he must inform the Chairperson. They must then inform, in writing, the person or agency making the allegation, of the reasons for this decision. If this person or agency still has concerns, they are free to consult with or report to the relevant personnel in the HSE(TUSLA) or Garda on an individual basis. The provisions of the Protection for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act 1998 apply, once the report is made in good faith.

If the DLP, following consultation with the HSE (TUSLA), decides the matter is for reporting s/he should inform the Chairperson, who should follow the procedures outlined in the Children First – National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2011.

The DLP completes a standard reporting form as comprehensively as possible.

The Chairperson will inform the employee in writing of the fact and nature of the allegation and whether or not it has been reported to the HSE (TUSLA).

The Chairperson has a duty to afford the employee fairness and due process. S/he is entitled to details and a copy of the written allegation, to advice and representation and an opportunity to respond to the Chairperson of the Board within one week.

**RESPONDING**

***In the event of the Chairperson of the Board being made aware of a complaint or suspicion regarding an employee:***

On being made aware of an allegation of abuse, the Chairperson will seek legal advice and base his/her response on this advice.

The Chairperson will consider whether there is any risk to the pupil's safety. If the Chairperson considers there is a risk, s/he may require the employee to take immediate paid administrative leave,

If unsure, the Chairperson will consult with the HSE (TUSLA) and/or the Gardaí

If administrative leave has been invoked, the Chairperson will inform the DES. The HSE and in some cases the Gardaí may also be notified in accordance with legal advice received.

Once it is deemed necessary by the DLP and Chairperson to make a report, after receiving advice from the HSE (TUSLA), the Chairperson will convene a meeting with the Board of Management as soon as possible.

Where the alleged abuse has taken place within the school, or relates to the abuse of pupils of the school, by school employees outside of school time, the Board of Management will investigate the matter. They will convene a further meeting once the relevant information has been gathered. At this meeting the Board of Management will consider in detail:

1. The allegations made and their source.
2. The advice given by relevant authorities.
3. The written responses of the employee.

At this meeting,

1. The person / agency who is alleging abuse by the school employee should be offered an opportunity to present his/her case to the Board of Management and may be accompanied by another person.
2. Parents/ Guardians may act on behalf of the child.
3. The employee should also be afforded an opportunity to present their case and may also be accompanied.

The Board of Management must deal with the matter sensitively and the employee must be fairly treated.

The Board of Management will make a decision on action, if any, based on their investigation, and will inform the employee of this in writing. They will also inform the DES of the outcome, if the employee is on administrative leave.

Where it is not possible for the Board of Management to conduct an enquiry into allegations (e.g. where abuse has occurred in past employment, or where the employee is undergoing investigation by relevant authorities), the Chairperson will act on advice of authorities. The Chairperson will maintain close contact with the HSE (TUSLA) and receive reports and records from them where appropriate.

**Appendix 8: Role of the Staff Member including all Teachers, Special Needs Assistants, Caretakers, Secretaries etc.**

*It is the responsibility of all staff to familiarise themselves with the Children First National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2011, in particular:*

- Chapter 3: Definition & Recognition of Child Abuse
- Chapter 4: Basis for Reporting and Standard Reporting Procedures
- Appendix 1: Signs and symptoms of Child Abuse

**Guidance for teachers and staff members in handling...**

*Disclosures from children*

Where a child discloses alleged abuse to a staff member, the person receiving that information should listen carefully and supportively. Great care must be taken to maintain the child's trust. This is not a formal interview. The following advice is offered:

1. Listen to the child
2. Do not ask leading questions or make suggestions to the child
3. Offer reassurance but do not make promises
4. Do not stop a child recalling significant events
5. Do not over-react
6. Confidentiality should not be assured – explain that further help may have to be sought
7. Record the discussion accurately noting:
  - What, where and when?
  - Descriptions and possible sketches of physical injuries
  - Explanations of injuries using direct quotations if appropriate
8. Retain the record securely.

The staff member should obtain only necessary relevant facts. It is not the responsibility of school personnel to investigate allegations of abuse.

The DLP should then be informed and given relevant records.

If the suspected abuser is the DLP then the suspicion and any records will be passed on to the Chairperson who will then proceed as per guidance.

**Suspensions of Abuse**

Staff members who suspect abuse should refer to the *Children First Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2011, especially:*

- Chapter 3: Definition and Recognition of Child Abuse
- Chapter 4: Basis for reporting and Standard Reporting Procedures
- Appendix 1: Signs and Symptoms of Child Abuse

Staff members should observe and record over time the dates / symptoms / behaviour causing them concern. Staff members should inform the DLP and pass on all records.

**Appendix 9: Role of the Designated Liaison Person (DLP)**

The DLP acts as a liaison with outside agencies, HSE (TUSLA), Gardaí and other parties with child protection concerns.

The DLP will inform all school personnel of the availability of the Children First – National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2011 in the school. S/he will photocopy and circulate, to all staff, Chapters 3, 4, and Appendix 1, of the document and advise on good practice.

The DLP will be available to staff for consultation regarding suspicions of and / or disclosures of abuse.

The DLP will keep records of any consultations regarding suspicions / disclosures of abuse.

The DLP will seek advice from the HSE (TUSLA)

The DLP will report suspicions and allegations of abuse to the HSE or/and An Garda Síochána based on this advice.

The DLP will maintain proper records in a secure, confidential manner and in a secure location.

The DLP will keep up to date on current developments regarding child protection.

**Guidance for the Designated Liaison Person (DLP) in handling reported concerns and disclosures.**

Where the DLP/DDLP have concerns about a child, but are not sure whether to report the matter to the HSE (TUSLA), they should seek appropriate advice. To do this the DLP/DDLP should make informal contact with the assigned (on duty) Social Worker. The DLP/DDLP in this case, should be explicit the s/he is requesting advice and not making a report. If advised to report a matter, the DLP will act on that advice.

A report will then be made to the HSE (TUSLA) by the DLP/DDLP in person, by telephone or in writing. In the event of an emergency or non-availability of HSE (TUSLA) staff, the report should be made to the Gardaí. The DLP should also report the matter to the Chairperson of the Board of Management, who should then follow the procedures as outlined in chapter 4 (section 4.3) of Children First-National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2011.

A standard reporting form is completed by the DLP/DDLP as comprehensively as possible. (See Appendix 1 of Children First)

Parents / Guardians will normally be informed that a report is being made. In the event that it may be decided that informing the parent / guardian /carer is likely to endanger the child or place the child at further risk, the decision not to inform the parent/guardian/carer should be briefly recorded together with reasons for not doing so.

When the allegation is against the DLP, the Chairperson then assumes responsibility for reporting the matter to the HSE and filling in the standard reporting form.

Where there are allegations or suspicions of Peer Abuse, the DLP will follow the same procedures:

- Parents/Guardians /Carers of all parties will be notified and the DLP will inform`
- the Chairperson.
- Principal and class teachers will make arrangements to meet separately with all parents / Guardians / Carers to resolve the matter.
- The school will make arrangements to minimise the possibility of the abusive behaviour recurring.

### **Child Protection Meetings (Case Conferences)**

Procedures:

A request is made from the HSE (TUSLA) through the DLP who should consult with the Chairperson of the Board of Management of the school. The Chairperson may seek clarification through the DLP as to why the attendance of the school employee is necessary and ascertain who else will be present.

The school employee may complete a report for the meeting / conference.

The school employee will be advised if children/parents/guardians are going to be present. The school employee may contact the Chairperson of the Child Protection Meeting for advice.

The school employee may keep a child's behaviour under closer observation, if requested to do so. This may include observing the child's behaviour, peer interactions, school progress or informal conversations.

In all cases, individuals who refer or discuss their concerns about the care and protection of children with HSE staff, should be informed of the likely steps to be taken by the professionals involved. Where appropriate and within the normal limits of confidentiality, reporting staff will be kept informed about the outcomes of any enquiry or investigation following on from their report.

Teachers attending a child protection meeting/case conference should familiarise themselves with the protocol outlined on pgs 149 – 155 Children First National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2011.

**Appendix 10: Checklist for Annual Review of the Child Protection Policy**

The Board of Management must undertake an annual review of its Child Protection Policy and the following checklist shall be used for this purpose.

The checklist is designed as an aid to conducting this review and is not intended as an exhaustive list. The BoM may wish to include other items in the checklist that are of particular relevance to Catherine McAuley School and reserves the right to do so if/when the need occurs.

1.	As part of the overall review process, Boards of Management should also assess other school policies, practices and activities vis a vis their adherence to the principles of best practice in child protection and welfare as set out in the school's Child Protection policy	YES	NO
2.	Has the Board formally adopted a child protection policy in accordance with the 'Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools'?	YES	NO
3.	As part of the school's child protection policy, has the Board formally adopted, without modification, the 'Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools'?	YES	NO
4.	Are there both a DLP and a Deputy DLP currently appointed?	YES	NO
5.	Are the relevant contact details (HSE-TUSLA and An Garda Síochána) to hand?	YES	NO
6.	Has the DLP attended available child protection training?	YES	NO
7.	Has the Deputy DLP attended available child protection training?	YES	NO
8.	Have any members of the Board attended child protection training?	YES	NO
9.	Has the school's child protection policy identified other school policies, practices and activities that are regarded as having particular child protection relevance?	YES	NO
10.	Has the Board ensured that the Department's 'Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools' are available to all school personnel?	YES	NO
11.	Does the Board have arrangements in place to communicate the school's child protection policy to new school personnel?	YES	NO
12.	Is the Board satisfied that all school personnel have been made aware of their responsibilities under the 'Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools'?	YES	NO
13.	Since the Board's last annual review, was the Board informed of any child protection reports made to the HSE/An Garda Síochána by the DLP?	YES	NO
14.	Since the Board's last annual review, was the Board informed of any cases where the DLP sought advice from the HSE and as a result of this advice, no report to the HSE was made?	YES	NO
15.	Is the Board satisfied that the child protection procedures in relation to the making of reports to the HSE/ An Garda Síochána were appropriately followed?	YES	NO
16.	Were child protection matters reported to the Board appropriately recorded in the Board minutes?	YES	NO
17.	Is the Board satisfied that all records relating to child protection are appropriately filed and stored securely?	YES	NO
18.	Has the Board ensured that the Parents' Association has been provided with the school's child protection policy?	YES	NO

## **Appendix 11**

### **The Children First Act 2015**

The Children First Act 2015 was signed into law by the President on 19 November 2015. The Act obliges certain professionals and others working with children to report child protection concerns to the Child and Family Agency and to assist the Agency, if requested to do so, in its assessment of a child protection risk.

The Act obliges a provider of services to children to undertake an assessment of the potential for risk of harm to a child while that child is availing of its services and to prepare an appropriate Child Safeguarding Statement in accordance with the Bill.

The Act also provides statutory underpinning for the Children First Inter-Departmental Implementation Group which will promote cross-sectoral implementation and compliance with Children First legislation and report on an annual basis to the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs.

The Children First Act 2015 also provides for an amendment to the Non-Fatal Offences Against the Person Act 1997 to abolish the common law defence of reasonable chastisement.

The Children First Act 2015 states that “(a) provider of a relevant service shall ensure, as far as is practicable, that each child availing of the service from the provider is safe from harm while availing of that service”. Relevant services include “a school or centre of education”. The act states that where a “mandated person” (which includes a teacher registered with the Teaching Council) believes or has reasonable grounds to suspect, on the basis of information that he or she has received, acquired or becomes aware of in the course of his or her employment or profession as such a mandated person, that a child – (a) has been harmed, (b) is being harmed, or (c) is at risk of being harmed, he or she shall, as as practicable, report that knowledge, belief or suspicion, as the case may be, to the Tusla – Child and Family Agency.

There are certain exceptions to the requirement to report See Section 14(3)