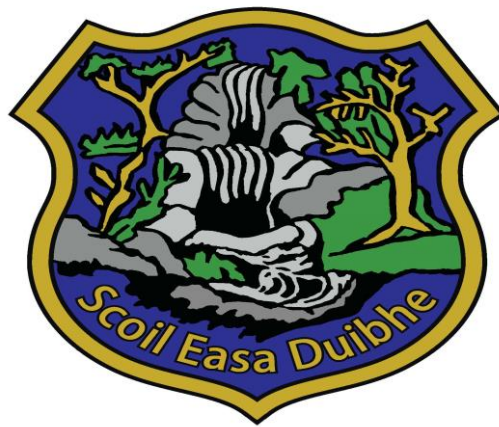


ASDEE NATIONAL SCHOOL



CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

June 2022

Asdee National School Child Protection Policy

Introductory Statement

The staff and management of Asdee N.S. have developed and agreed this policy in line with the current recommendations and guidelines relating to child abuse prevention and child protection guidelines. In accordance with the requirements the Board of Management of Asdee N.S. has adopted and will implement fully and without modification the Department of Education and Skills' Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary School

This policy addresses the responsibilities of the school in the followings areas:-

- a) Prevention – curriculum provision
- b) Procedures - procedures for dealing with concerns / disclosures
- c) Practice - best practice in child protection

An individual copy of this policy document and the appended section from the Department's **Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools** will be made available to all staff.

It is incumbent on all staff to familiarise themselves with 'Children First' and the DES child protection procedures.

Aims

This policy aims to

- Create a safe, trusting, responsive and caring environment
- Provide personal safety skills education which specifically addresses abuse prevention for all children in the school
- Develop awareness and responsibility in the area of child protection amongst the whole school community
- Put in place procedures for good practice to protect all children and staff
- Ensure that all staff members are aware of and familiar with the 'Children First' and the DES guidelines and procedures in relation to reporting concerns and/or disclosures of child abuse. areas for
- Provide for ongoing training in this and related all school staff

Rationale

Schools have an obligation to provide students with the highest possible standard of care in order to promote their well-being and protect them from harm. School personnel are especially well placed to observe changes in behaviour, failure to develop or outward signs of abuse in children.

Mindful of this primary duty of care, the Board of Management of Asdee N.S. fully endorses "Children First"-National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017 the designated guidelines for the protection and welfare of children as issued by the Department of Health and Children, and **Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools** from the Department of Education & Skills 2017. See circular 81/2017

Prevention

The Stay Safe programme is the primary resource used in this school to provide education for children on abuse prevention. The programme is taught as part of the schools' SPHE curriculum under the strand unit Safety and Protection (Personal Safety).

On enrolment of their child parents will be informed that the Stay Safe programme is in use in the school and a copy of the Stay Safe 'A Parent's Guide' provided.

The formal lessons of the programme will be taught in their entirety every second year in accordance with the SPHE two-year cycle plan.

Staff will make every effort to ensure that the messages of the programme are reinforced whenever possible

Procedures

All staff (teachers, special needs assistants, ancillary staff, secretarial, caretaking etc.) in this school will follow the recommendations for reporting concerns or disclosures as outlined in 'Children First' and the Department of Education and Skills document, 'Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools.

Asdee N.S. staff will follow the guidelines in the Children First document & report to Tusla (child & family agency) . Tusla has developed and put in place a secure online portal for reporting child protection concerns. When reporting a concern to Tusla the Tusla portal shall be used whenever possible.

- The Board of Management has appointed Mrs Michelle Sheehy as the Designated Liaison Person (DLP) and Mrs Assumpta Collins as the deputy DLP.
- The Board will ensure that appropriate and on going training as necessary will be available for DLP and the DDLP.
- The Board fully endorses arrangements for the vetting of teaching and non-teaching staff as outlined in Circular 0094/2006, June 2006, for the Department of Education & Science.
- Recognising that the safety and well being of children attending the school is a priority, the Board undertakes to include Child Protection & Health & Safety matters as items on the agenda of all Board meetings forthwith.
- The Board will ensure that all school staff, teaching and non-teaching are aware of their obligations under the guidelines detailed in Children first and the procedures to be followed in the event of concern.
- The Board recognises that it has two duties of care. The primary duty is the protection, safety and welfare of the children attending Asdee N.S. The Board as an employer also has duties and responsibilities towards its employees.
- As an employer, the Board will seek legal advice if an allegation of abuse is made against a school employee.

- The Board will adhere to the protocol outlined in Ch. 5. Allegations or Suspicions of Child Abuse of School Employees, in “Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools” from the Department of Education & Skills 2017, to authorise any actions required to protect the children in its care. The Board notes that school employees may be subject to erroneous or malicious allegations. Any allegation of abuse should be dealt with sensitively. The employee should be treated fairly which includes the right not to be judged in advance of a full and fair enquiry. The Board accepts that the principles of natural justice and fair procedures must be adhered to.
- The Board believes that the academic, personal and social development of children flourishes in a culture where good relationships are encouraged, people feel valued and respected and appropriate support is available for those in difficulty.
- The Board is committed to the maintenance of the environment where children feel secure, are encouraged to express themselves and are listened to. All children in the school will be made aware that there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried. In addition, opportunities will be included in the curriculum for children to develop the skills they need to keep them safe.
- The Board undertakes to circulate this Child Protection policy statement to all parents and guardians when it is reviewed or updated. This policy statement and “Children First” will be available for viewing in the school office.
- This policy statement regarding Child Protection at Asdee N.S. applies to all staff, members of the Board of Management, volunteers and contractors working in the school.
- This policy statement will be subject to review during each academic year forthwith.

The Board of Management recognises that child protection and welfare considerations permeate all aspects of school life and must be reflected in all of the school’s policies, practices and activities. Accordingly, in accordance with the requirements of the Department of Education and Skills’ Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools, the Board of Management of Asdee N.S. has agreed the following child protection policy:

1. The Board of Management has adopted and will implement fully and without modification the Department’s Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools as part of this overall child protection policy.
2. The Designated Liaison Person (DLP) is: Mrs. Michelle Sheehy
3. The Deputy Designated Liaison Person is Mrs. Assumpta Collins
4. In its policies, practices and activities, Asdee N.S. will adhere to the following principles of best practice in child protection and welfare:

The school will

- recognise that the protection and welfare of children is of paramount importance, regardless of all other considerations;
- fully co-operate with the relevant statutory authorities in relation to child protection and welfare matters
- adopt safe practices to minimise the possibility of harm or accidents happening to children and protect workers from the necessity to take unnecessary risks that may leave themselves open to accusations of abuse or neglect;
- develop a practice of openness with parents and encourage parental involvement in the education of their children; and
- fully respect confidentiality requirements in dealing with child protection matters.

The school will also adhere to the above principles in relation to any adult or pupil with a special vulnerability.

5. The Board has ensured that the necessary policies, protocols or practices as appropriate are in place in respect of each of the listed items.

During exceptional school closures (e.g. Covid-19) where distance learning is in practice.

Teachers will endeavour to communicate with pupils via their parents & follow DES guidance on distant learning. Staff are advised not to communicate with children directly/individually unless under the supervision of an adult. See also

- Child protection risk assessment
- Safety Statement & Annual safety checklist
- Code of Behaviour Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Supervision Policy

6. This policy has been made available to school personnel and the Parents' Association and is readily accessible to parents on request. A copy of this policy will be made available to the Department and the patron if requested.

7. This policy will be reviewed by teachers & the Board of Management annually. This policy was reviewed & ratified by the Board of Management in June 2022

Signed: _____

Chairperson: Oliver Kearney

Date: _____

Signed: _____

Secretary to B.O.M./ Principal :Michelle Sheehy

Date: _____

