



# 1. Introduction

## Background

The first Child Protection Policy was drafted by the staff of the school at a Staff Meeting in January 2006. It was ratified by the Board of Management on 7<sup>th</sup> February 2006 and is reviewed on an annual basis. The Board of Management of DPETNS has adopted the Department of Education and Skills Guidelines and Procedures in relation to Child Protection and Welfare (Child First Guidelines). In February/March 2018 a full review of the policy was undertaken to ensure compliance with the Children First Act 2015 and with the requirements of Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary schools 2017. Staff will undergo a full day training on Child Protection on 20<sup>th</sup> March 2018.

## School Philosophy

Children who attend Donabate/Portrane Educate Together National School will be encouraged to reach their full potential mentally, physically, spiritually, emotionally and socially, in an atmosphere and environment in which they feel safe, valued and secure and in which respect for self and others is the norm. Our school operates under the direct patronage of Educate Together. The four underlying principles which form our ethos are:

- Co-educational
- Child-centred
- Equality Based
- Democratically run

## Aims

1. To raise awareness of the concept of child abuse (emotional, physical, sexual and neglect) among all school staff (including teachers, SNA's secretary, caretaker etc) and among the parents/guardians of our students and any visiting teachers/volunteers in the school.
2. To put in place clear procedures for all school personnel dealing with suspicions and allegations of child abuse.
3. To identify curricular content and resources that contribute to the prevention of child abuse and to enable children to properly deal with abuse if it occurs.

4. To promote and protect the welfare of all the pupils in our care.
5. To carry out a comprehensive Child Safeguarding Risk Assessment.
6. To draw up an Action Plan in order to ensure the protection and welfare of the children attending our school.

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

- The Board of Management has primary responsibility for the care and welfare of the pupils of the school.
- The DLP has specific responsibility for Child Protection in the school.
- All staff have a duty of care to ensure that arrangements are in place to protect children from harm and to record and monitor any concerns relating to children's well being.
- All staff all have a duty to familiarise themselves with this Child Protection Policy and Child First Guidelines.

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 Donabate/Portrane Educate Together National School has agreed the following child protection policy: 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. The Designated Liaison Person (DLP) is Maeve Corish. The Deputy Designated Liaison Person (Deputy DLP) is Susan Clarke. In its policies, practices and activities, Donabate/Portrane Educate Together National School will adhere to the following principles of best practice in child protection and welfare.

The school will

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

## 2. Child Safeguarding Risk Assessment

In accordance with section 11 of the Children First Act 2015 and with the requirement of Chapter 8 of the *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017*, the following is the Written Risk Assessment of Donabate/Portrane Educate Together National School

### A. List of school activities

- All normal activities associated with a Primary School fulfilling the DES curriculum
- Daily assembly and dismissal of students
- Play times – outdoors in fine weather, in classrooms in wet/inclement weather.
- Physical Education lessons.
- Engagement in Sports' Teams – Football, Hurling, Soccer, Hockey, Basketball and Cricket.
- School Tours and educational trips
- .Use of toilets/bathroom areas.
- Annual Sports Day.
- School trips involving overnight stays.
- Use of Communication Technology by students in school.
- After school activities organised by the PTA.
- Nature walks and visits to local areas of interest eg Newbridge Park, beach etc
- Representing the school at different events – Peace Proms, visiting other schools
- After school use of premises by other organisations.
- Pastoral care of students especially those with additional needs or vulnerabilities.
- Administration of Medication
- Administration of First Aid

<b>Risk Identified:</b>	<b>Procedure in place to manage the risk identified.</b>
1. Children at risk of being bullied by other students.	<p>Anti-Bullying Policy in place and reviewed annually. Children supervised in the school yard and throughout the school day. A week dedicated to Anti Bullying education each September. Regular conversations in class to encourage the children to report incidents of meanness or bullying. An Anti-Bullying Code taught in all classes. The school works to create a nurturing school climate where conflicts are minimised. The children are taught the SALT programme which helps them to resolve conflicts. A peer mediation service is in place to encourage children to resolve conflict before it escalates.</p>
2. Children at risk of being physically assaulted or ill-treated by other children.	<p>Positive Behaviour Policy in place. Guidelines on yard rules issued annually to staff. Supervision Policy in place. The yard is supervised from 8.30 in the mornings and during all breaks in school. Staff wear high visibility jackets so that they can easily be spotted and identified. A roster is drawn up of the teachers on supervision duty each day, this roster is displayed in the staff room. A post holder ensures that staff absences are covered. Children are made aware of the Anti Bullying Policy and are encouraged to speak up if they encounter any ill treatment. The Stay Safe Programme is fully implemented.</p>
3. Children at risk of being ill-treated, neglected or assaulted by Staff members.	<p>All staff members are Garda Vetted. A Garda Vetting Policy is in place. Staff are recruited carefully, references are checked and all staff are expected to treat children with respect and to nurture a child – centred environment. Children are encouraged to speak out if they are unhappy in any way.</p>

	<p>Children are generally taught in full class settings or in small groups- rarely in a one on one situation. Our Safeguarding Statement outlines the school's procedures for one to one teaching.. Intimate care policy agreements are in place for children who require intimate care.</p> <p>The Stay Safe Programme is fully implemented in the school.</p>
4. Children at risk of being ill-treated, neglected or assaulted by visiting coaches/guest speaker etc	The class teacher remains with his/her own class when a guest speaker or visiting coach is present. Visitors engaged in coaching/teaching are Garda vetted in advance. We have a set of Guidelines for Visiting Speakers and for Volunteers.
5. Children at risk of being ill-treated or assaulted by members of the public when out on a school trip	Children are closely supervised by school staff when on a trip. Our Supervision Policy outlines procedures for school trips.
6. Children are risk of being ill-treated, neglected or assaulted during After School Classes	The Child Protection Policy, Anti Bullying Policy, Positive Behaviour Policy and Garda Vetting Policies are in place for after school activities also.
7. Children at risk of being ill-treated, neglected or assaulted by members of the public.	All visitors to the school are asked to report to the school office before entering the building. Staff members are requested to talk to any visitors they see on the premises and to establish their business in the school.
8. Risk of harm due to children inappropriately accessing/using computers, social media, phones or other devices when in school.	An Acceptable Usage Policy is in place to safeguard children. Internet safety workshops are delivered on an annual basis to the students from 3 <sup>rd</sup> to 6 <sup>th</sup> class with information evenings for parents provided on an annual basis. The school Mobile Phone Policy is strictly enforced. Schools are protected by the schools broadband service by fortiguard blocks to inappropriate websites. The school also uses Symantec antivirus to block certain content. Teachers are asked to closely supervise children when they are working on computers to ensure that they are using them appropriately.

<p>9. Risk of harm to children due to inappropriate behaviour when using the toilets/bathrooms.</p>	<p>Toilets are located within the classrooms. Only one child is permitted to enter the bathroom area at a time. Class teachers are requested to closely monitor this and ensure that this policy is implemented. Children who need to use the bathroom during yard times must request permission from the staff on duty and are accompanied into the building by the Toilet Monitors who remain on the corridor. The Deputy Principal and/or Principal supervises this corridor at break times.</p>

In undertaking this risk assessment, the Board of Management has endeavoured to identify as far as possible the risks of harm that are relevant to this school and to ensure that adequate procedures are in place to manage all risks identified. While it is not possible to foresee and remove all risk of harm, the school has in place the procedures listed in this risk assessment to manage and reduce risk to the greatest possible extent. This risk assessment has been completed by the Board of Management on March 7<sup>th</sup> 2018. It shall be reviewed as part of the school's annual review of its Child Safeguarding Statement.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management

### 3. Child Safeguarding Statement

Donabate/Portrane Educate Together National School is a primary school providing primary education to pupils from Junior Infants to Sixth Class.

In accordance with the requirements of the Children First Act 2015, Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017, the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools 2017 and Tusla Guidance on the preparation of Child Safeguarding Statements, the Board of Management of Donabate/Portrane Educate Together National School has agreed the Child Safeguarding Statement set out in this document.

- 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 2017 as part of this overall Child Safeguarding Statement
- 2 The Designated Liaison Person (DLP) is Maeve Corish.
- 3 The Deputy Designated Liaison Person (Deputy DLP is Susan Clarke.
- 4 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, procedures, practices and activities In its policies, procedures, practices and activities, the school will adhere to the following principles of best practice in child protection and welfare:

The school will:

- recognise that the protection and welfare of children is of paramount importance, regardless of all other considerations;
- fully comply with its statutory obligations under the Children First Act 2015 and other relevant legislation relating to the protection and welfare of children;
- fully co-operate with the relevant statutory authorities in relation to child protection and welfare matters
- adopt safe practices to minimise the possibility of harm or accidents happening to children and protect workers from the necessity to take unnecessary risks that may leave themselves open to accusations of abuse or neglect;
- develop a practice of openness with parents and encourage parental involvement in the education of their children; and
- fully respect confidentiality requirements in dealing with child protection matters.

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

- 5 The following procedures/measures are in place:

- In relation to any member of staff who is the subject of any investigation (howsoever described) in respect of any act, omission or circumstance in respect of a child attending the school, the school adheres to the relevant procedures set out in Chapter 7 of the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017 and to the relevant agreed disciplinary procedures for school staff which are published on the DES website.
- In relation to the selection or recruitment of staff and their suitability to work with children, the school adheres to the statutory vetting requirements of the National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Acts 2012 to 2016 and to the wider duty of care guidance set out in relevant Garda vetting and recruitment circulars published by the DES and available on the DES website.
- In relation to the provision of information and, where necessary, instruction and training, to staff in respect of the identification of the occurrence of harm (as defined in the 2015 Act) the school-
  - Has provided each member of staff with a copy of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement
  - Ensures all new staff are provided with a copy of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement
  - A copy of the school's Safeguarding Statement is kept in the pigeon hole outside each classroom.
  - Encourages staff to avail of relevant training
  - Encourages Board of Management members to avail of relevant training
  - The Board of Management maintains records of all staff and Board member training
- In relation to reporting of child protection concerns to Tusla, all school personnel are required to adhere to the procedures set out in the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017, including in the case of registered teachers, those in relation to mandated reporting under the Children First Act 2015.
- In this school the Board has appointed the abovenamed DLP as the "relevant person" (as defined in the Children First Act 2015) to be the first point of contact in respect of the child safeguarding statement.
- All registered teachers employed by the school are mandated persons under the Children First Act 2015.
- In accordance with the Children First Act 2015, the Board has carried out an assessment of any potential for harm to a child while attending the school or participating in school activities. A written assessment setting out the areas of risk identified and the school's procedures for managing those risks is attached as an appendix to this statement.



- The various procedures referred to in this Statement can be accessed via the school's website, the DES website or will be made available on request by the school.
- If any staff member has a child care concern, they are required to record that concern in the hard backed copy designated to each class. All entries must be signed and dated. Hard backed copies are kept in a locked filing cabinet/drawer.
- All visitors to the school are required to check in and sign in at the school office. Staff on yard duty will be aware of visitors entering the schoolyard and will ascertain their intentions. Visitors to our school are not given unsupervised access to children.
- Volunteer helpers are required to read the Guidelines for Volunteer Helpers, to sign the agreement and to familiarize themselves with the Child Safeguarding Statement. We also have a Policy on Guest Speakers in the school.
- Bullying Behaviour will be addressed under our Anti-Bullying policy. If the behaviour involved is of a sexual nature or regarded as being particularly abusive then the matter will be referred to the DLP.
- The PTA organise and run after school classes. The Child Safeguarding Policy is made available to the PTA who undertake the responsibility of ensuring that all teachers and supervisors of After School Classes are aware of the Child Safeguarding Statement and agree to operate in accordance with it.
- School attendance is monitored carefully. We will also monitor non attendance in correlation with signs of neglect/physical/emotional abuse. The NEWB will be informed of any concerns relating to a child's attendance.
- Parents will agree in writing if 1:1 teaching is taking place. Where practicable children receiving extra learning support will be supported in class or taught in small groups. If a teacher is alone with a child and there is no window in the classroom door the door to the room will be left open.
- If any child in our school requires intimate care the procedures involved in such care will be agreed in consultation with the pupil, their parent/guardian and any other personnel involved in the care of the pupil, in keeping with best practice and keeping the best interests of the child to the fore and with due consideration to maintaining the child's personal dignity. Such procedures, when agreed will be communicated to all parties involved and recorded.
- The Stay Safe Programme will be taught formally in Senior Infants, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> annually and revised in 1<sup>st</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup>.

- RSE lessons, Walk Tall lessons, Weaving Wellbeing and the Learn Together Programme will also enhance the children’s learning regarding personal safety.

This statement has been published on the school’s website and has been provided to all members of school personnel, the Parents’ Association and the patron. It is readily accessible to parents and guardians on request. A copy of this Statement will be made available to Tusla and the Department if requested.

This Child Safeguarding Statement will be reviewed annually or as soon as practicable after there has been a material change in any matter to which this statement refers.

This Child Safeguarding Statement was adopted by the Board of Management on \_\_\_\_\_

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

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Principal/Secretary to the Board of

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

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

