



Child Protection Policy

Dunshaughlin Community College

2015

Version 3

Introduction

Dunshaughlin Community College 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.

'Teachers are particularly well placed to observe and monitor children for signs of abuse. They are the main caregivers to children outside of the family context and have regular contact with children in the school setting'

(Children First, 1999, page 50).

The Board of Management of Dunshaughlin Community College carried out a review of the existing policy and practices. The Board of Management has agreed the following child protection policy in accordance with the requirements of the Department of Education and Skills' ***'Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools'***.

Scope

This policy applies to students of Dunshaughlin Community College.

School Mission Statement

'We are committed to the provision of a complete education maximising student potential to the highest possible standards through a highly committed staff in a modern well equipped college. We strive to create an atmosphere of mutual respect in a happy, caring, supportive but challenging and well structured environment.

A demanding environment can also be a caring environment.'

Relationship of Policy to DCC's Mission Statement

This policy has been developed in line with the mission statement of DCC, whose ethos and philosophy have at its core, the care and welfare of all students. The school strives to provide a safe and secure learning environment for the development of our students.

Policy Content & Implementation

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 Mr Shane Foley (School Principal).

The **Deputy Designated Liaison Person** (DDL) is Ms Bridget Bennett (School Deputy Principal).

The names of the DLP and DDL are posted in the school reception.

In its policies, practices and activities, Dunshaughlin Community College 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/staff from the necessity to take unnecessary risks that 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.

The DLP, DDL and members of the Board of Management have attended training on Child Protection. Training has also been provided for all administrative and teaching staff this year (see Appendix 1 for training material).

The school Care Team meets on a weekly basis to discuss any concerns regarding student welfare and to discuss support strategies for relevant students. The Care Team consists of:

- Two Guidance Counsellors
- Principal
- Deputy Principals
- Support for Learning Coordinator

Many initiatives e.g. friendship week, relational bullying workshops, pastoral care classes are held during each school year to minimise and counteract bullying in DCC.

A pastoral care class was held earlier this year on Child Protection (See Appendix 2).

Related Policies

- Pastoral Care Policy
- Code of Conduct
- Anti-bullying Policy
- School Attendance Policy
- Learning Support Policy

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

Clearly Defined Roles and Responsibilities

Our school acknowledges the contribution of all members of the school community. Each member has responsibility for the care of students. Clearly defined roles and responsibilities are defined in the Department of Education and Skills' ***'Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools'***.

Timeframe

This Child Protection Policy was revised in January 2012 in consultation with the Board of Management of our school. The revised Child Protection Policy (Version 1) was ratified by our Board of Management and became an official school policy on 26th January 2012

This policy has been made available to school personnel and the Parent's Association. It is also readily available to parents on request and will be uploaded onto our school website. A copy of this policy will be made available to the DES and the VEC if requested.

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