



Swords Educate Together National School

Roll Number 20145 O

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

General Information

Name of School:	Swords Educate Together N.S.
Address:	Applewood, Swords, Co. Dublin.
Telephone:	01 8903899
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Email:	info@swordseducatetogether.ie
Website:	www.swordseducatetogether.ie
Denominational Character:	Multi-Denominational
Patron:	Educate Together

References

- Children First (Department of Health and Children 1999)
- Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools (DES 2011)

Introduction

The Board of Management (BoM) 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 Swords Educate Together National School 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 Karl Breen.
3. The Deputy Designated Liaison Person (Deputy DLP) is Eoghan Beglan and an additional Deputy DLP is Bronagh Dillon.

4. In its policies, practices and activities, Swords 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.

5. The following Swords Educate Together National School policies are particularly relevant to this Child Protection Policy:

- Positive Code of Behaviour
- Anti-bullying Policy
- Pupil Attendance Policy
- Supervision of Pupils Policy
- Special Needs Policy
- Critical Incident Policy
- Rainbows Child Protection Policy
- Internet Safety Policy/Mobile Phone Policy

Swords Educate Together National School will fully implement the Stay Safe programme

This Child Protection Policy is also particularly relevant to the participation by pupils in: Sporting Activities, School Outings and extra-curricular activities organised by Swords Educate Together National School Parent Teacher Association (PTA). All other practices and activities, where child protection might have particular relevance, will take due consideration of the procedures outlined within this policy. See Appendix A.

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

7. This policy will be reviewed by the Board of Management of Swords Educate Together National School once in every school year. A checklist, to be used in undertaking the review is included at **Appendix 2**. The school will put in place an action plan to address any areas for improvement which might be identified in the annual review.

The Board of Management shall make arrangements to inform school personnel that the review has been undertaken. Written notification that the review has been undertaken shall be provided to the Parent Teacher Association. A record of the review and its outcome shall be made available, if requested, to the patron, Educate Together and the DES.

This revised policy was adopted by the Board of Management on _____

Signed: *Glaine Bevingham*
Chairperson of Board of Management

Signed: *Paul Bevan*
Principal

Date: 29th April 2015

Date: 29th April 2015

Date of next review: March 2016

Appendices

- Appendix 1: Swords Educate Together National School Child Protection Practices and Activities
- Appendix 2: Checklist for Annual Review of the Child Protection Policy

Appendix 1:

Swords Educate Together National School Child Protection Practices and Activities

The staff and BoM of this school have identified the following as areas of specific concern in relation to Child Protection. 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.

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

School personnel should avoid doing anything of a personal nature for children that they can do for themselves.

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

All media products (CDs, DVDs etc.) should be checked for their appropriateness with regard to age and suitability.

Pupils with Special Educational Needs (SEN)

In the case of special needs pupils where resource hours and assistance are sanctioned on an individual basis staff will work with children in SEN rooms (glass panels in doors and between SEN rooms) rendering the occupants visible at all times. (see Special Needs Policy)

Children with physical disabilities who may require assistance in toiletry matters will be aided by a Special Needs Assistant who has met the necessary screening requirements when being employed by the school. Parents and guardians will be consulted with regarding this assistance.

Supervision

The school's supervision policy will be followed by all staff to ensure that there is comprehensive supervision of children at all breaks. A rota will be displayed in the administration area/staff room to cover morning and lunchtime breaks. See Supervision Policy for agreed rules around break-times and procedures around teacher absences.

Visibility

In the event that teachers find themselves on their own in the classroom with a child, they should ensure they are visible by having window blinds open, classroom door panel clear to view through and/or door open.

Teachers will ensure that children are visible in the school playground. At break times children will not be allowed to spend time in classrooms, toilets or areas where they would not be under adult supervision. They are not to leave the school playground or to engage with adults who are outside of the school playground. Adults are not permitted to enter playground or school building without first going to reception.

Visitors/Guest Speakers

All scheduled/unscheduled visitors to the school are expected to report to the office on arrival. They will be furnished with a Swords Educate Together National School visitor badge to be displayed on their person.

The drop-off/pick-up of children throughout the teaching day will be processed through the school office. The school must be notified in advance if anyone other than the parent is collecting the child and if there are any changes to pick up arrangements.

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. Vetted guest speakers and visiting teachers of varying disciplines, employed by the Board of Management of Swords Educate Together National School to perform specific duties, will only be left to work with a class alone at the Principal's discretion following consultation with senior management.

Swimming

Children in our school do not attend school organised swimming classes at present but should this become a practice at any time in the future due regard will be given to this in this policy.

Toilets

It is school policy that two children are permitted to enter the toilet area at a time. Children who need to use the toilet during yard time must seek the permission of the teacher on yard and will be given a Toilet Pass. Sixth class pupils monitor entry to the toilet area at Exit Door A and hold on to the Toilet Pass for pupils. Toilets are not generally used during First Break (10.20-10.30). During yard time the toilets in the PE area beside Exit Door A will be used.

Toileting accidents

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. 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. Class teacher will communicate this to parents and guardians and in the case of (B) to the principal.

- (A)** If a child has a wetting accident during the school day, a staff member will assist them change into dry clothes. Before assisting the child the staff member will inform a second staff member and the second person will remain in the room adjoining the toilet area. Alternatively, the child may be taken to the administration area.
- (B)** It is school policy to call a Parent/Guardian if a child soils themselves in school and requires intimate care. In the unlikely event of failing to make contact staff will follow the procedures as for (A) above. Soiled clothes will be sent home unclean in a sealed bag. All accidents of this nature will be reported to the Principal and Parents/Guardians.

Intimate care needs

- 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. This is in keeping with best practice, keeps the best interests of the child to the fore and maintains the child's personal dignity.
- 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 recorded, kept in the child's file and communicated to all parties involved
- 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.

Accidents

While every precaution will be taken under our Health and Safety Statement to ensure the safety of children, we realise that accidents will happen. Accidents will be noted in our Incident book and will be addressed under our Accident Policy as part of Health and Safety.

One-to-one teaching

It is the policy in this school that one-to-one teaching is often in the best interest of the child. Every effort is made to ensure that this teaching takes place in an open environment. Parents of children who are to be involved in one-to-one teaching will be informed and their agreement in writing sought.

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

Changing for Games

Pupils will be expected to dress and undress themselves for games e.g. GAA. Where assistance is needed this will be done in the communal area and with the consent of parents. Under no circumstances will members of staff/volunteers be expected to or allowed to dress/undress a child in a private area. In such situations where privacy is required, the parents/guardians of the child will be asked to assist the child.

School Tours/Trips

School staff accompanying children on school tours/trips (including after school sporting events) will deliver a duty of care commensurate with the trip/venue. The higher the risk factor the lower the ratio of teacher/responsible adult to children. As per School Tour Policy, hired buses/vehicles must provide safe transportation and a functioning seatbelt for every child/adult and car seats if in car transport.

SETNS School Volunteers

The BoM of Swords Educate Together National School has requested that all adult school volunteers apply to be vetted for 2011 -2012 school year.

Attendance

School attendance is monitored carefully as per our attendance policy. At the end of each year Attendance Certificates are awarded to children who achieve full attendance. 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.

The NEWB will be informed of any concerns relating to a child's attendance. We will issue a letter to parents when their child has missed 10 days/20days. Children who miss 20 days or more will be reported to the NEWB in accordance with legislation.

Behaviour

Children are to be encouraged at all times to play co-operatively and to show respect for themselves and others. Our positive Behaviour Policy clarifies this. If an incident occurs which we consider to be of a sexualised nature we will notify the DLP who will record it and respond to it appropriately.

Bullying

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.

Children travelling in staff cars

In emergency or exceptional cases only where a staff car must be used to transport a child, children will **never** be taken alone in a staff car.

Communication

Every effort will be made to enhance pupil-teacher communication. If pupils have concerns they will be listened to sympathetically. The SPHE/Oral Language/ETP programmes allow for open pupil-teacher communication, which is hoped will aid the pupil-teacher relationship. 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.

Induction of Staff

The DLP will be responsible for informing all new teachers and ancillary staff of the Child Protection Guidelines and Procedures (DES, 2001) and Children First Guidelines (1999), but particularly the recently published Children First – National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children (2011). The DLP will give a copy of the Child Protection Guidelines and Procedures, Chapters 3 & 4 and Appendix 1 of Children First and this Child Protection Policy to all new staff. All new teachers are expected to teach the designated SPHE objectives to their class. A member of staff, once trained, will be responsible for the mentoring of new teachers and will be responsible for supporting new teachers as they implement the SPHE objectives. Bronagh Dillon is 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.

Induction of Pupils

All parents/guardians and children will be made aware of attendance rules and their implications as laid down in the Education Welfare Act (2000). All parents/guardians 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. Parents will be requested to contact the school principal if they have any difficulty with their child participating in the sensitive aspects of the SPHE curriculum.

All new parents/guardians will be given a copy of the school's enrolment policy, which outlines the procedures parents/guardians and children should use when contacting the school if there are absences or concerns of an educational/personal/family matter. Parents/guardians 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 positive Behaviour and Anti-Bullying policies in the Information Booklet.

Internet Safety

It is the intention of the Principal and Staff at Swords Educate Together National 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. The Stay Safe lessons in each classroom will be supplemented with a lesson from the Webwise resource pack recently made available to schools.

Record Keeping

Teachers will keep records on each child's reports using Swords Educate Together National School/NCCA Record Keeping Sheets. These records are kept in the office and/or in locked filing cabinets in SEN rooms. Roll books will be updated daily. Sensitive information regarding children will be shared on a need-to-know basis. All educational files of pupils who no longer attend this school are kept in storage in locked filing cabinets in SEN rooms.

The Board of Management of Swords Educate Together National School has ensured that the necessary policies, protocols or practices as appropriate are in place in respect of each of the above listed items.

Child Protection Policy

Appendix 2: 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 Board of Management may wish to include other items in the checklist that are of particular relevance to Swords Educate together and reserves the right to do so if/when the need occurs.

As part of the overall review process, the Board 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 this Child Protection Policy.

	Yes/No
Has the Board formally adopted a child protection policy in accordance with the 'Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools'?	
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'?	
Are there both a DLP and a Deputy DLP currently appointed?	
Are the relevant contact details (HSE and An Garda Síochána) to hand?	
Has the DLP attended available child protection training?	
Has the Deputy DLP attended available child protection training?	
Have any members of the Board attended child protection training?	
Has the school's child protection policy identified other school policies, practices and activities that are regarded as having particular child protection relevance?	
Has the Board ensured that the Department's "Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools" are available to all school personnel?	
Has the Board arrangements in place to communicate the school's child protection policy to new school personnel?	
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'?	
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?	
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?	
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?	
Were child protection matters reported to the Board appropriately recorded in the Board minutes?	
Is the Board satisfied that all records relating to child protection are appropriately filed and stored securely?	
Has the Board ensured that the Parents' Association (if any), has been provided with the school's child protection policy?	
	Yes/No
Has the Board ensured that the school's child protection policy is available to parents on request?	
Has the Board ensured that the Stay Safe programme is implemented in full in the school?	
(applies to primary schools)	
Has the Board ensured that the SPHE curriculum is implemented in full in the school?	

Is the Board satisfied that the Department's requirements for Garda Vetting have been met in respect of all school personnel (employees and volunteers)? *	
Is the Board satisfied that the Department's requirements in relation to the provision of a child protection related statutory declaration and associated form of undertaking have been met in respect of persons appointed to teaching and non-teaching positions?*	
Is the Board satisfied that, from a child protection perspective, thorough recruitment and selection procedures are applied by the school in relation to all school personnel (employees and volunteers)?*	
Is the Board satisfied that the 'Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools' are being fully and adequately implemented by the school?	
Has the Board identified any aspects of the school's child protection policy and/or its implementation that require further improvement?	
Has the Board put in place an action plan containing appropriate timelines to address those aspects of the school's child protection policy and/or its implementation that have been identified as requiring further improvement ?	
Has the Board ensured that any areas for improvement that that were identified in any previous review of the school's child protection policy have been adequately addressed?	

* In schools where the VEC is the employer the responsibility for meeting these requirements rests with the VEC concerned. In such cases, this question should be completed following consultation with the VEC.

Signed _____ Date _____

Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed _____ Date _____

Principal

Notification regarding the Board of Management's annual review of the child protection policy

To: _____

The Board of Management of _____ wishes to inform you that:

- The Board of Management's annual review of the school's child protection policy was completed at the Board meeting of _____ [date].

- This review was conducted in accordance with the checklist set out in Appendix 2 of the Department's 'Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools'

Signed _____ Date _____

Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed _____ Date _____

Principal

Child Protection Contacts

Designated Liaison Person (DLP)

Karl Breen

Deputy DLP

Eoghan Beglan and Bronagh Dillon

Garda Station

Telephone: 01-6664700

Local Contact For

**'The Children and Family Social Services of the HSE'
TELEPHONE: 01-8708000**

Address:

**Lakeshore Drive
Airside Business Park
Swords
Co. Dublin**

NEWB

TELEPHONE: 01-8738615

NEPS

TELEPHONE: 018892700