

BELLURGAN NATIONAL SCHOOL

Principal: Mr. Dermot McCoy.

*Bellurgan,
Co. Louth.*



*Roll No.
16249E*

Child Protection Policy

Bellurgan National School strives to provide a child-friendly, secure environment catering for the needs of all students as far as is practicable and where respect is fostered in a culture which values diversity and difference. An individual copy of this policy document will be made available to all staff. It is incumbent on all staff to familiarize themselves with ‘Children First’, The Education Act 1998, The Child welfare Act 2000, Department Circular 65 / 2011 and ‘Child Protection Procedures 2011’.

Rationale

This policy has been developed and agreed in line with the current recommendations and guidelines relating to child abuse prevention and child protection procedures. It addresses the responsibilities of the school in the following areas;

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

Aims and Objectives of the policy

- Create a safe, trusting, responsive and caring environment.
- Provide a 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.

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- 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.
- Provide for ongoing training in this and related areas for all school staff.

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. The formal lessons of the programme will be taught in their entirety each year. Staff will make every effort to ensure that the messages of the programme are reinforced whenever possible.

Procedures

- All staff (Teachers, SNAs, ancillary, 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 Science document, 'Child Protection, Guidelines and Procedures'. (See attached Appendix, pages 5 to 20 from the above DES guidelines)
- The Board of Management of this school has appointed **Dermot McCoy** (Principal) as the Designated Liaison Person (DLP) and **Aine Byrne** as the deputy DLP.
- The staff and management of this school have agreed:
 1. All concerns/ disclosures involving child protection/child welfare issues will be reported in the first instance to the DLP (deputy DLP where appropriate).
 2. Each report to the DLP will be dated and signed by the person making that report.
 3. A strict adherence to maintaining confidentiality – information regarding concerns or disclosures of abuse should only be given on a 'need to know' basis.

Practice:

The following areas have been considered by the staff and board of management of this school 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.

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Physical contact

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 it's 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.

Visitors / Guest Speakers

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 by guests is appropriate.

Children with specific toileting/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. The staff to be involved in this care will be identified and provision will be made for occasions when the particular staff involved is absent. A written copy of what has been agreed will be made and kept in the child's file.

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. A record of all such incidents will be kept and principal and parents will be notified.

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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 will be made to ensure that this teaching takes place in an open environment. 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/ PE/ Swimming

Pupils will be expected to dress and undress themselves for games/PE/ swimming. Where assistance is needed this will be done in the communal areas 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 cubicle/private area. In such situations where privacy is required the parent/guardian of the child will be asked to assist the child.

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 principal and parents.

Ratification and Communication

This policy will be in operation from the school year 2015/2016, having been ratified by Staff and BOM. It is the responsibility of the Board of Management to ensure that adequate training and support is provided for all staff.

Date of next policy review: September 2016

Department Appendix: Child Protection Policy of Bellurgan N.S

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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 Bellurgan 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 **Dermot McCoy**.
3. The Deputy Designated Liaison Person (Deputy DLP) is **Aine Byrne**.
4. In its policies, practices and activities, **Bellurgan 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 pupil with a special vulnerability.

5. Policies relevant in our school to Child Protection include; Code of Behaviour/Anti-bullying Policy, Pupil Attendance Strategy, Supervision of Pupils, Sporting Activities and School Tours

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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.

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 the Board of Management once in every school year. The Board of Management must undertake an annual review of its child protection policy.

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