



Mol an Óige Steiner NS

Child Protection Policy

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 Mol an Óige 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 Orla Cotter.
3. The Deputy Designated Liaison Person (Deputy DLP) is Sarah Wheeler.
4. In its policies, practices and activities, Mol an Óige 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 principals in relation to any adult or pupil with a special vulnerability.

The following are a list of school policies, practices and activities that are particularly relevant to child protection.

A. Recruitment and selection of staff

Correct procedures will always be followed advertising, interviewing and the selection of staff. Garda Vetting will always be sought.

B. Physical contact

Any physical contact between school personnel and the child should be in response to the needs of the child and not the needs of the adult. There may be occasions when a distressed child needs comfort and reassurance that may include physical contact such as a caring parent would give. While physical contact can be used to comfort, reassure or assist a child the following should be factors in assessing its appropriateness:

- It is acceptable to the child concerned
- It is open and not secretive
- It is appropriate to the age and developmental stage of the child.

School personnel should not do things of a personal nature for a child which the child can do for him / herself. – where a child does need help etc.

C. Toileting/Intimate Care Needs:

1. Children with specific toileting / intimate care needs.

In all situations where a pupil needs assistance with toileting/ intimate care needs a meeting will be convened after enrolment and before the child starts school, between parents/ guardians and the class teacher and if appropriate to 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 be made for occasions when the particular staff involved are absent. A written copy of what has been agreed will be made and kept in the child's file. Parents will then be informed of all toileting accidents.

2. Toileting accidents:

It is school policy that only one child is permitted to enter the toilet area in the classroom at a time. Children who need to use the toilet during yard time must ask the teacher's permission. If a child has a toileting accident during the school day a member of staff will provide a clean dry change of clothes. If a child is unable to dress themselves independently, a member of staff will assist them while keeping the toilet door open, also endeavouring to minimise upset caused to the child. Before assisting the child, the staff member will inform another staff member. Parents will then be informed of all toileting accidents.

3. Toileting outdoors

When on nature walks, if a child needs to go to the toilet, children are given toilet paper, and are directed to as private a place as possible.

D. Changing for Games/ PE/ Swimming:

In our school swimming and surfing are part of the third term's activities.

- Parents of Junior and Senior Infants are requested to come and assist children's dressing and undressing.
- In instances where parents cannot attend they must make arrangements with other parents to assist, and will inform the class teacher of these arrangements. One member of staff will be available to assist unaccompanied children. Parents will be informed.
- Parents are encouraged to dress children in clothes that will assist with changing on the day.
- Children have an area designated to them for the duration of their time in the changing rooms; for the purpose of changing before and after their swimming lesson.
- Members of staff will provide supervision in the changing areas. If a child is distressed / incapable a member of staff will assist and inform their parents.

E. Supervision of Pupils

1. Yard supervision

Every effort will be made to ensure that there is comprehensive supervision of children throughout the school day.

- A roster of staff on duty has been drawn up and displayed in the staff room.
- Teachers will ensure that the children are visible in the schoolyard.
- Children will not leave the schoolyard or engage with adults outside of the schoolyard.

If your child leaves the school premise without permission a member of staff will stay with your child and you will be contacted immediately. In the case of your child leaving the school premise and their whereabouts being unknown, a member of staff will endeavour to find them. You will be contacted immediately and so will the guards to help in finding the child as quickly as possible.

2. Walks

Children on walks will be accompanied by an appropriate number of adults depending on the needs of the class.

3. Sports Day / School Tours / Outings:

Every effort will be made to adhere to best practice as agreed and outlined above.

- Extra staff will be provided to supervise, when necessary.
- During out of school events such as St Bridget's day and the School Sports Day, parents will be invited to assist with supervision.
- In the case of an overnight stay, one male and one female supervisor will be provided from the parent body. These supervisors must be garda vetted. Girls are always segregated from boys. Mobile phones are not permitted and there will always be three adults present, with at least one from each gender.

4. Carpooling

In instances where a staff car must be used to transport a child, children will never be taken alone. At least two children at any one time must travel with an adult from the teaching staff / parent body.

5. First aid / accidents

- If an adult has to leave the yard to attend to a child who has been hurt they will be accompanied by another child.
- Serious accidents will be recorded in the accident book.

6. Collection of children

- Parents will receive a form at the start of the year on which they state the arrangements for their children at 3 o' clock e.g. bus, afterschool, walking home.
- Children leave classroom row by row. Teachers wait at the door to say farewell, and instruct children to either join bus queue, go to afterschool room, or wait in shelter until their parents collect them, as appropriate.
- Parents assist with the walking bus. Three parents, wearing high visibility vests, escort children from the school gate, and across the road to the car park.

F. One - to One teaching:

Depending on the needs of individual children staff may find themselves working in a one-to-one situation with a child.

- Every effort is made by the school that this teaching happens in an open environment.
- Parents are made aware that certain children receive one-to-one instruction.
- These teaching times are timetabled.

- Principal, classroom teachers, SNA's are welcome to enter any of the learning support/resource rooms at any time.

G. Visitors/Guest Speakers:

Regular volunteers will be directed to the school website where they will find our Child Protection Policy. They will be advised to read the document so as to become familiar with our procedures.

- Visitors/Guest speakers should not be left on their own with children.
- The school (Principal/teachers) is responsible for checking the identification of visitors/guest speakers and to ensure that the material presented by them is suitable.

Situations where the school receives volunteers / visitors / guest speakers:

- Handwork, gardening, building (volunteers from parent body).
- Professional Development.

H. Ancilliary staff

Our regular substitute SNAs, teachers, the school caretaker and school secretary will be provided with a copy of this policy.

I. Internet use Acceptable Use policy – photos, Identifying Pupils

Parental consent will be sought at enrolment to allow children to be photographed by the school or media during school events.

Links to other Policy/Planning areas:

SPHE Curriculum Strand Unit on 'Safety and Protection'

Code of Behaviour

Stay Safe Programme

Relationship and Sexual Education Policy

Anti-Bullying Policy

Health & Safety

School Attendance Policy

Acceptable Usage Policy

