

**Policy: Child Protection**

**School Details**

**School:** Gaelscoil Uí Drisceoil  
**Address:** Duncitil,  
Gleann Maghair  
Co. Chorcaí

**Phone:** 0214822482  
**Email:** [gaelscoiluidrisceoil@gmail.com](mailto:gaelscoiluidrisceoil@gmail.com)  
**Website:** [www.gaelscoiluidrisceoil.com](http://www.gaelscoiluidrisceoil.com)

**Category:** Multi-denominational

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**Number of  
Students on Roll :** 349

**Introductory Statement**

This policy was compiled on the \_\_\_\_\_ in consultation with teachers, the Board of Management and parents.

**Rationale**

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. This policy has been agreed by the Board of Management in accordance with the requirements of the Department of Education and Skills' Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools.

**Ethos**

**Gaelscoil - a school in which all subjects are taught through the medium of Irish in an attractive encouraging environment. Irish is the language of the school community, between children, teachers and management.**

- **Multi-denominational** i.e. all children having equal rights of access to the school, and children of all social, cultural and religious backgrounds being equally respected.
- **Co-educational** and committed to encouraging all children to explore their full range of abilities and opportunities

- **Child centred** in their approach to education
- **Democratically run** with active participation by parents in the daily life of the school whilst positively affirming the professional role of the teachers

Where the Irish and English versions of this policy are at variance with one another, the Irish version is deemed to prevail. The Principal and Chairperson will be happy to clarify any matters arising from this policy.

### **Subject Matter**

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. 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.

1. The Designated Liaison Person (DLP) is Siobhán Ní Chatháin
2. The Deputy Designated Liaison Person (Deputy DLP) is Fionnuala Ní Drisceoil
3. In its policies, practices and activities, Gaelscoil Uí Drisceoil 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.

## **Gaelscoil Uí Drisceoil, Dúncitil, Gleann Maghair, Co. Chorcaí**

4. The Board will ensure that the Code of Behaviour, the Anti-bullying Policy and the Pupil Attendance Strategy take cognisance of - The Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children (Department of Children and Youth Affairs 2011).

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.

5. This policy has been made available to school personnel and the Parents' Association and is readily accessible to parents on the school website. A copy of this policy will be made available to the Department and the patron if requested.
6. This policy will be reviewed by the Board of Management once in every school year.

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management \_\_\_\_\_ [date]

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

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Principal

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

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

Date of next review: \_\_\_\_\_

**A: Recruitment and Selection of Staff**

The recruitment of staff and volunteers is crucial to ensuring that those working with the children in the school are safe adults insofar as this can be determined. While correct procedures must always be followed in relation to advertising, interviewing and the selection of staff, other practices should also be considered.

All applicants should be asked to supply in writing information which includes

1. Garda Vetting
2. Appropriate personal details
3. A resumé of past and current work/volunteering experience, indicating relevant qualifications or skills acquired
4. At least two written references – verification of references should be sought through making verbal contact with the referees.

It is also considered good practice to do background checks on all candidates being considered to assist in a voluntary capacity or seeking work experience in the school. Many colleges and organizations seeking to place individuals on work experience in the school will supply that information.

It is also the responsibility of the Board of Management to ensure that all personnel are properly supervised and supported in the work they are doing.

## **B: General Conduct**

It is imperative that in all dealing with the children in our care a balance is struck between the rights of the child and the need for intervention.

As a general rule 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. While physical conduct can be used to comfort, reassure or assist the child the following should be factored in accessing 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.
- Inappropriate physical contact also includes rough physical play and horseplay (tickling, wrestling etc).
- All children should be treated with equal respect – favouritism is not acceptable.

School personnel should never engage in or allow:

- the use of inappropriate language or behaviours, e.g sarcasm
- physical punishment of any kind
- sexually provocative games or sexually suggestive comments about or to a child
- the use of sexually explicit or pornographic material etc.

ALL MEDIA products: CDs, DVDs, computer software etc. – should be checked for its appropriateness with regard to age and suitability.

## **C. Toileting/Intimate Care**

### **1. Children with specific toileting/intimate care needs**

Normally a child who has specific toileting needs will have a special needs assistant assigned to him/her.

It is very important that, before the child is enrolled in the school, a meeting is held at which all school personnel involved with the child attend along with the child's parents/guardians.

At that meeting the needs of the child should be addressed and agreement reached as to how the school can meet those needs.

It is important that those involved with the intimate care of the child agree practices which are acceptable to the staff, the child and the parents. It may be useful to have an Intimate Care Policy outlining the agreed practices.

Practices agreed should be sufficiently flexible to cover unforeseen situations, e.g. if personnel involved in assisting the child are absent.

**The Board of Management will be made aware of practices agreed.**

## **2. Toileting 'Accidents'**

Toileting accidents are not uncommon, particularly at junior level. Parents may not be in a position to come to the school immediately should their child have a toileting accident and consideration has to be given to the implications of leaving a child unattended to in this situation. School staff will attend to the child, in a manner which will have due regard to minimising upset to the child. A note should be kept of such incidents and parents should be informed.

### **Wetting:**

#### **Steps to be taken:-**

- provide a change of clothes for the child – class teacher
  - ❖ A good supply of new underwear should be kept by all Infant Teachers
  - ❖ Only new underwear will be given to children
  - ❖ A change of tracksuit trouser/school trouser should be kept in all infant classrooms.
- provide an opportunity for the child to change clothes in the toilet
- inform parents- child may be released home with parent if appropriate.
- place wet clothes in a plastic bag

### **Soiling:**

#### **Steps to be taken:-**

- Parents are contacted and asked to come to the school to help the child
- If parents cannot be contacted the following steps will be taken
- The class teacher and another teacher/SNA will be present in toilet to help the child to clean themselves
- Should the child feel sick or become uncomfortable the child will be allowed to wait in office until parent/guardian arrives to collect them.

### **3. Changing for Games/PE and Swimming**

- Activities that require children to change clothing, appropriate steps should be taken to ensure that reasonable protection is afforded to the children and staff members.
- Due regard needs to be given to the potential health, safety and abuse concerns. To that end the Board of Management should ensure that:
  - a balance is struck between the child's right to privacy and adequate supervision with due regard to gender issues
  - It is good practice to have at least two adults present while children are changing for swimming or at any 'out-of-school' event.
  - Where a child needs to be helped when changing clothes for swimming etc,
    - ❖ a teacher/parent will assist them.
    - ❖ No parent or adult should be left on their own with a child/children in changing room at swimming pool
  - parents are notified if volunteers/parents are assisting children
- staff should avoid assisting children with anything of a personal nature that the child can do for him/herself
- a report of any incident will be made to the principal, parents and Board of Management, as appropriate.

**D: One-to-one teaching**

Individual one-to-one teaching will be provided where appropriate.

Every effort will be made to ensure the protection of children and staff. The following steps are followed.

- The door is kept open when one-to-one teaching is being carried out by learning support/resource teachers
- The teacher will sit beside or across from student
- A copy of the teacher's timetable will be kept in office and in classroom
- Parents will be advised of the arrangement in place when learning support or one-to-one teaching is necessary.

**E: Visitor/Guest Speakers**

- Visitors/Guest speaker should not be left alone with children.
- The school (BOM/principal/teacher as appropriate) has a responsibility to check out the credentials of all visitor/guest speakers before hand and to ensure that the content/material in use is appropriate.