**Polasaí Cosaint Leanaí / Child Protection Policy**

**Scoil Shéamais Naofa, Bearna (19803T)**

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 Scoil Shéamais Naofa 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 Máire de Báicéir, Principal

3. The Deputy Designated Liaison Person (Deputy DLP) is Mairéad Ní Neachtain, Deputy Principal

4. In its policies, practices and activities, Scoil Shéamais Naofa, Bearna 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. The attached appendix lists school policies, practices and activities relating to this school, that are particularly relevant to child protection (e.g. the Code of Behaviour/Anti-bullying Policy, Pupil Attendance Strategy, Supervision of Pupils, Sporting Activities/School Outings/Pupil Work Placements at post primary etc.)

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. This policy will also be available to download from the school website, [www.barnaprimaryschool.ie](http://www.barnaprimaryschool.ie)

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

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on 29.1.2014 and reviewed/updated annually.

Signed: **W. Golden** Signed: **Máire de Báicéir**

Cathaoirleach Bord Bainistíochta/ Príomhoide/Principal

Chairperson of Board of Management

Date: 19.1.2017 Date: 19.1.2017

Next review: 2018

**Appendix 1**

The staff and board of management 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:

1. Physical contact

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 contact can be used to comfort, reassure or assist a child, the following are 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.
  + Occasionally it may be necessary to restrain a child who is a danger to himself or other persons

1. Visitors / Guest Speakers:

The teacher/staff member will be present with the children when a visitor/ guest speaker is present.. The school assumes responsibility to check out the credentials of the visitor/guest speaker and to ensure that the content/material in use is appropriate.

1. Children with specific toileting/intimate care needs:

If a child enrols in the school who has specific toileting needs, a meeting will be held at which all school personnel involved with the child attend along with the child’s parents/guardians. At the meeting the needs of the child will be addressed and agreement reached as to how the school can meet those needs. It is important that those involved with the child agree practices which are acceptable to the staff, to the child and to the parents. The Board of Management will be made aware of the practices agreed

1. Toileting accidents:

If a child has a toileting accident at school, the parents/guardians/named contact will be contacted. It is expected that they will come to the school and assist the child. In the event of being unable to contact the parents, or the parents being unable to come to the school, the child will be supplied with a set of spare underwear/clothing as appropriate. The child would be expected to change him/herself. If the child requires assistance, a staff member will assist the child, but always in the company of another adult. A note will be kept of such incidents and parents informed.

1. One- to One teaching

One to one teaching may be provided if deemed appropriate. Every effort should be made to ensure the protection of children and staff. Clear boundaries are put in place regarding the physical environment- panel in door, door open, seating arrangements, proper timetabling. Parents are always informed when children are receiving such support

1. Changing for Games/ PE/ Swimming

Parents in the first instance will be requested to ensure children wear suitable clothing for games/PE and swimming. Prior to swimming all children will be briefed on how to pack their bag correctly, the privacy of oneself and others when changing, and also behaving appropriately. If volunteers assist with swimming or games clear boundaries are set down according to the age/needs of the children. Staff and volunteers should avoid doing anything the child can do for him/herself. Parents will be notified if volunteers are assisting children. Volunteers and staff will always work with children in a public area. A report of any incident would be made to the principal, parents and Board of Management as appropriate.

1. Recruitment and selection of staff

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

* All applications should be asked to supply in writing information which includes appropriate personal details, a resumé of past and current work/volunteering experience, indicating relevant qualification or skills acquired.
* At least two referees-verifications of which shall be sought.
* Garda vetting will be sought also

1. Supervision of pupils

Children are adequately supervised at all times during school hours. It is expected that a child will never be in the school building alone with a teacher. Should any incidents/accidents take place while children are under the supervision of school staff, these will be adequately recorded. First Aid will always be administered in a public place, or in the presence of other adults/children. Children will never travel alone in a staff member’s car. Children will not be allowed to be collected by someone unknown to the staff. Where schools are aware of a court order being in place which prevents someone from having access to a child, a copy of that order should be requested by the school. In the event of the parents/guardians non-compliance with the court order, the Gardaí should be summoned to the school to enforce it.

1. Internet use – Acceptable Use Policy – Photos, Identifying pupils-Mobile Phones etc.

We ensure that are children are protected in the school’s acceptable use policy, and children are always adequately supervised on the net at school.

1. Collection of Pupils

Pupils may be collected from school by either parent, unless that school authority has been shown a Court Order preventing this. If a person other than the child’s parents is authorised to collect them from school, a parent should formally put this in writing to the school.

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 the principal and parents.

**Links to other policy / planning areas:**

Prevention: SPHE curriculum, Strand Unit on ‘Safety and Protection’,

The School Code of Discipline

Procedures: Code of Behaviour

Health and Safety Statement.

Practice: Swimming procedures

School Tours / Outings

IT – Acceptable use