

**ST. ATTRACTA'S SENIOR NATIONAL SCHOOL
MEADOWBROOK, DUBLIN 16**



**POLICY ON
CHILD PROTECTION**



**SCOIL SHINSIREACH NAOMH ATHRACHT
CLUAIN GHLAISE, ÁTH CLIATH 16
UIMHIR ROLA: 19716B**

Scoil Shinsireach Naomh Athracht, Cluain Ghlaise, Áth Cliath 16

Child Protection Policy

of St. Attracta's Senior National School.

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 compliance with the requirements of the Department of Education and Skills' Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools, the Board of Management of **St. Attracta's Senior 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 **Muireann Máirtín**.
3. The Deputy Designated Liaison Person (Deputy DLP) is **Evelyn Doyle**.
4. In its policies, practices and activities, **St. Attracta's Senior 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.The school will also adhere to the above principles in relation to any adult pupil with a special vulnerability.
5. The following school policies, guidelines, practices and activities are particularly relevant to child protection: the Code of Good Behaviour, Anti-Bullying Policy, Pupil Attendance Strategy, Supervision of Pupils, School Tours & Visits, Swimming Guidelines, Visitors & Visiting Teachers, Children Leaving School Early, Accidents and Record Keeping. 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.

Scoil Shinsireach Naomh Athracht, Cluain Ghlaise, Áth Cliath 16
Guidelines For Good Practice When Working With Children
of St. Attracta's Senior National School.

The following guidelines have been agreed, following consultation, among staff and Board of Management in relation to the protection of children in the school, and the adults who work with them. **All school personnel and invited teachers/visitors are asked to read and sign this document prior to working with children in the school.** (This will be requested on an annual basis to ensure that all school personnel are familiar with these guidelines.)

1. Children should never be left unsupervised. If a teacher must leave the room, they must arrange supervision - if possible - and inform another teacher, who will take responsibility in their absence.
2. Visitors are a regular feature of school life, and can add greatly to the quality of educational experience offered to the pupils.

Examples include:

- Sports coaches
- Music/drama teachers
- Visiting instructors and lecturers
- Members of the parish clergy
- Student teachers
- People on work experience/observers
- Performing Artists

When a visitor, such as outlined above, is in the school, the class teacher should also be present at all times, as they are ultimately responsible for the care and supervision of the pupils. If circumstances should arise when the teacher must leave the room, the visitor should also leave the room and the teacher must inform another teacher, who will take responsibility in their absence.

3. There should be no physical contact between adults and children.
4. When a teacher is working on a one-to-one basis with a child, the door of the room should be left clearly open, and the occupants should be clearly visible.
5. If, in exceptional circumstances, a teacher is driving a child home (or elsewhere), there must always be at least one other person accompanying them.
6. No child may be allowed home early without a note from the parent/guardian, unless the person collecting the child is known to the school. If necessary, the home should be contacted by telephone, should there be any doubt.
7. Before any activity is begun (such as sports activity, walk, scientific experiment etc.) the class teacher or facilitator (in consultation with the class teacher) should, in the first instance, check the physical surroundings and equipment, if relevant, to ensure no risks or dangers are present.
8. All valuables should be kept on your person. If that is not possible, contact the principal or deputy principal to make an alternative arrangement.

**I have received a copy of the school's Child Protection Policy
and I have familiarised myself with the above guidelines.**

Signed: _____ Block Capitals: _____

Position: _____ Date: _____

Scoil Shinsireach Naomh Athracht, Cluain Ghlaise, Áth Cliath 16
Organisational Issues relevant to Child Protection Policy
St. Attracta's Senior National School, Meadowbrook, Dublin 16.

MISSION STATEMENT

St. Attracta's Senior National School is a Catholic co-educational primary school which provides a happy caring and secure learning environment in which the individual student is enabled to achieve his/her full potential.

St. Attracta's Senior National School promotes excellence in teaching and learning. The school community that we create is welcoming, collegial, safe, respectful and inclusive of all its members. All aspects of the child, academic, spiritual, moral and cultural are cherished.

In keeping with our mission statement, we have an obligation to provide students with the highest possible standard of care in order to promote their well-being and protect them from harm. School personnel are especially well placed to observe changes in behaviour, failure to develop or outward signs of abuse in children.

This document should be read once staff have familiarised themselves with the school's Child Protection Policy and 'Children First - National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2011'.

RESPONSIBILITY TO REPORT

Any person, who suspects that a child is being abused, or is at risk of abuse, has a responsibility to report their concerns to the Health Service Executive.

The Protection for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act, 1998, provides immunity from civil liability to persons who report child abuse 'reasonably and in good faith' to designated officers of health boards or any member of An Garda Síochána. This means that even if a reported suspicion of child abuse proves unfounded, a plaintiff who took an action would have to prove that the reporter had not acted reasonably and in good faith in making the report.

Giving information to others for the protection of a child does not constitute a breach of confidentiality.

REPORTING TO THE BOARD OF MANAGEMENT

The DLP will inform the Board of Management of those cases where a report involving a child has been submitted to the HSE; the DLP shall also inform the Board of cases where the DLP sought advice from the HSE and as a result of this advice, no report was made. At each Board of Management meeting the principal's report shall include the number of all such cases and this shall be recorded in the minutes of the Board meeting.

ACCESS TO CHILDREN

A member of the teaching staff will always be present when external personnel visit classrooms. At no time will pupils be alone in the company of visitors to the school. The exceptions to this arrangement are vetted professionals such as Speech & Language Therapists, the NEPS psychologists, HSE Occupational Therapists or HSE vaccination teams, dental teams, or sight and vision teams who work with children in the school setting, with prior consent from Parents/Guardians.

STANDARD REPORTING PROCEDURES

If child abuse is suspected or alleged, the standard reporting procedures recommended in the guidelines will be followed. The standard HSE form for reporting will be used.

CO-OPERATION WITH PARENTS/CARERS

If child abuse is suspected, the DLP - in consultation with the Chairperson of the Board - should inform the family if a report is likely to be submitted to the HSE or An Garda Síochána, unless in their view, doing so may endanger the child.

VETTING

The Board fully endorses arrangements for the vetting of teaching and non-teaching staff as outlined in Circular 0063/2010 from the Department of Education and Skills. Once a teacher, SNA or other worker is employed in the school, these vetting arrangements are initiated by the principal

STAFF TRAINING & AWARENESS

The Principal (DLP), Deputy Principal (DDL) and Assistant Principal have attended several training courses on Child Protection over the years.

In October 2014 all school staff (teachers, SNAs, secretaries, caretaker) were offered training on Child Protection issues. This training was given by PDST Cuiditheoir Eimear Berry. The key topics covered were:

- Child Protection: How we got to where we are today - Historical developments in child protection practice, considering some of the landmark cases that contributed to current policy and practice and major reports in this area including The Ferns Report and The Ryan Report
- The Law and Child Protection - Relevant legislation and acquiring a working knowledge of such legislation as it is appropriate to the school and classroom setting
- Children First - The National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children (1998 and 2009)
- DES Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children (2001) - Examine duties of Designated Liaison Person and school staff when dealing with suspected abuse or neglect
- Child Protection at School - Policy, good practice guidelines, report writing and record-keeping

A copy of the 2011 'Children First National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children' is placed in the staffroom and in the Principal's office and is available online.

At the beginning of the school year each member of staff is provided with a copy of

- (i) the Board of Management's 'Child Protection Policy'
- (ii) the school's 'Guidelines for Good Practice when Working with Children'
- (iii) Organisational Issues relevant to Child Protection Policy

Each member of staff is required to sign a document stating that they have received and familiarised themselves with the school's Child Protection Policy. Each member of staff is also made aware of his/her responsibility to report.

Teachers are then required to place a copy of the policy at the front of their Long Term Planning Folders.

New members of staff are given copies of the above documents as well as the INTO booklet entitled 'Guidelines for Teachers', which contains useful information on accepted codes of practice within a school.

DISSEMINATION OF CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

The school's Child Protection Policy is displayed in the foyer of the school and outside the staffroom. It has also been made available to the parent body on the school website. A paper copy is available to any parent on request. A copy of the policy will be made available to the Department of Education & Skills and the Patron if requested.

BOARD & STAFF MEETINGS

The Board and Teaching Staff undertake to include Child Protection matters as an item on the agenda of all Board of Management and staff meetings. The Board of Management will review its policy at the first Board meeting of each academic year. A checklist to be used in undertaking the review is included with this document.

ORGANISATIONAL ISSUES

The following organisational issues are relevant to the school's Child Protection Policy:

Behaviour

Order and an atmosphere conducive to learning in school has a great influence on the child's attitude and behaviour. It is imperative that the atmosphere of the school/classroom be one of peace and harmony. Children are encouraged at all times to play co-operatively and inappropriate behaviour is addressed under our Code of Good Behaviour. If an incident occurs which is considered to be of a sexualised nature the DLP should be notified and will record it and respond to it appropriately.

Bullying

Our approach to the issue of bullying is one that endeavours to prevent rather than to cure bullying within school. Bullying in all its forms runs counter to the fostering of a positive atmosphere. Bullying behaviour is addressed under our Anti-Bullying policy. If the behaviour involved is considered to be of a sexualised nature or as being particularly abusive then the matter will be referred to the DLP.

Visibility

Teachers will endeavour to ensure that children are visible in the schoolyard. Children will not be allowed to spend time in classrooms, toilets or other areas where they would not be under adult supervision. They are not permitted to leave the school yard without permission or to engage with people who are outside of the school yard or adults who enter the school yard.

Visitors & Visiting Teachers/Invited Visitors

Teachers on yard duty are asked to be vigilant of visitors entering the schoolyard and will ascertain their intentions. Unauthorised adults who enter the school yard at break times should approach a teacher on duty if they wish to speak to any of the children. They will be supervised in the discharge of their business. All visitors to the school will be asked to sign in at reception.

Visiting teachers and instructors will be furnished with a copy of our 'Guidelines for Good Practice when Working with Children' and will be asked to sign it. A copy will be given to the visiting teacher/invited visitor and the original will be retained in the principal's office.

Children leaving school early

If a child needs to leave school early as a result of illness parents must collect the child from the classroom and sign them out at the office. If a child needs to leave school early for an appointment elsewhere, parents must write a note to that effect to the teacher, collect them from the classroom and sign them out at the office. Under no circumstances will children be allowed to go home unaccompanied.

Record Keeping

Teachers will keep each child's file updated with results of assessments carried out, dates and details of meetings with parents and notes from parents. These records are kept in a secure place in the classroom. Copies of relevant reports will be retained in a locked filing cabinet in Room 5, the principal's office or the strong room. 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 the filing cabinet in Room 5 for ten years.

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 Accident Report book and will be addressed under our accident policy as part of Health and Safety.

Children travelling in staff cars

Teachers will not carry a child alone in their cars at any time. All teachers will act in 'loco parentis' and as such will act as prudent parents in transporting children to and from venues. A teacher may not carry a single child in their car at any time, except in exceptional circumstances and when there is no other alternative.

Induction of Teachers and Ancillary Staff

The DLP will be responsible for informing all school personnel of the 'Children First - National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2011'. The DLP will give a copy of the Child Protection Policy of St. Attracta's Senior School to all new staff. Colleagues who work in the same standard as a new teacher will assist in the mentoring of new teachers and will be responsible for supporting new teachers as they implement the Social Personal and Health Education (SPHE) objectives. These teachers are also responsible for informing the teacher of record keeping procedures within the school.

Induction of Pupils

All parents of new pupils are given a copy of the school's Eolas booklet. This document outlines the procedures parents and children should use when contacting the school if there are absences or concerns of an educational/ personal/family matter. Parents are encouraged to make an appointment with the class teacher/principal if they wish to discuss their child's progress. Parents of all new pupils should be given a copy of the school's Child Protection policy, the Code of Good Behaviour, the Anti-Bullying policy and the Homework policy. All parents and children will be made aware of attendance rules and their implications as laid down in the Education Welfare Act (2000). All parents will be informed of the programmes in place in the school that deal with personal development e.g. SPHE, RSE and Walk Tall. The school's enrolment policy and all other policies are available to parents of all new pupils.

Communication

Every effort is made to develop good pupil-teacher communications. If pupils have concerns they will be listened to sympathetically. The SPHE/Oral English/RE 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 required to leave the classroom door open. Communication with parents in relation to a child's progress is essential to each child's wellbeing and this takes place formally and informally throughout the year. Circle Time is used by all teachers to discuss issues in a safe and secure environment.

Attendance

Pupil attendance will be monitored as per our Pupil Attendance Strategy. With regard 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 Deputy Principal is responsible for liaison with the National Education Welfare Board and works with the principal and teachers when concerns arise.

Child Protection Contacts

A copy of relevant contact numbers for Child Protection matters will be displayed in the foyer of the school, in the staffroom, in the principal's office and in the secretary's office.

MONITORING/EVALUATION/REVIEW

These procedures will be updated and reviewed annually by the principal, deputy principal and assistant principal to ensure that they are in line with current practice.

Scoil Shinsireach Naomh Athracht, Cluain Ghlaise, Áth Cliath 16

Child Protection Policy – Contacts

of St. Attracta's Senior National School

Phone: 01-2951627

DESIGNATED LIAISON PERSON:

Muireann Máirtín, Principal

DEPUTY DESIGNATED LIAISON PERSON:

Evelyn Doyle, Deputy Principal

DUTY CARE SOCIAL WORKER

See below

GARDAÍ

6665600

AMBULANCE

112 or 999

FIRE STATION

112 or 999

DOCTOR

5079977

Address	Duty Social Work Department, Our Lady's Clinic, Patrick Street, Dun Laoghaire, Co. Dublin.
Phone	01 6637300
Office Hours	9am - 5pm
Local Area Office	Dublin South East

Scoil Shinsireach Naomh Athracht, Cluain Ghlaise, Áth Cliath 16

BOARD of MANAGEMENT

CHECKLIST FOR ANNUAL REVIEW OF THE CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

St. Attracta's Senior National School, Meadowbrook, Dublin 16.

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. Individual Boards of Management may wish to include other items in the checklist that are of particular relevance to the school in question.

	YES/NO
Has the Board formally adopted a Child Protection Policy in accordance with the "Child Protection Procedures for Primary & Post Primary Schools"?	YES
As part of the Board's "Child Protection Policy" has the Board formally adopted without modification the "Child Protection Procedures for Primary & Post Primary School"?	YES
Are both a D.L.P. and a Deputy D.L.P. currently appointed?	YES
Are the relevant contact details for the H.S.E. and An Garda Síochana to hand?	YES
Has the D.L.P. attended Child Protection Training?	YES
Has the Deputy D.L.P. attended Child Protection Training?	YES
Have any members of the Board attended Child Protection Training?	YES
Has the Board's "Child Protection Policy" identified other school policies, practices and procedures that may have particular Child Protection relevance?	YES
Has the Board ensured that the Department's "Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools" are available to all school personnel?	YES
Has the Board arrangements in place to communicate the Board's "Child Protection Policy" to new school personnel?	YES
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"?	YES
Since the Board's last annual review, was the Board informed of any child protection reports made to the H.S.E./An Garda Síochána by the D.L.P.?	YES
Since the Board's last annual review, was the Board informed of any cases where the D.L.P. sought advice from the H.S.E. and as a result of this advice, no report to the H.S.E. was made?	YES

Is the Board satisfied that the child protection procedures in relation to the making of reports to the H.S.E./An Garda Síochána were appropriately followed?	YES
Were child protection matters reported to the Board appropriately recorded in the Board minutes?	YES
Is the Board satisfied that all records relating to child protection are appropriately filed and stored securely?	YES
Has the Board ensured that the Parents' Association has been provided with the Board's "Child Protection Policy"?	YES
Has the Board ensured that the Board's "Child Protection Policy" is available to parents on request?	YES
Has the Board ensured that the "Stay Safe Programme" is available to parents on request?	YES
Has the Board ensured that the S.P.H.E. curriculum is implemented in full in the school?	YES
Is the Board satisfied that the Department's requirements for Garda Vetting have been met in respect of all school personnel, employees and volunteers?	YES
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?	YES
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?	YES
Is the Board satisfied that the "Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools" are being fully and adequately implemented by the school?	YES
Has the Board identified any aspects of the Board's "Child Protection Policy" and/or its implementation that require further improvement?	NO
Has the Board put in place an action plan containing appropriate timelines to address those aspects of the Board's "Child Protection Policy" and/or its implementation that have been identified as requiring further improvements?	N/A
Has the Board ensured that any areas for improvement that were identified in any previous review of the Board's "Child Protection Policy" have been adequately addressed?	N/A