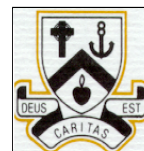


Sonas

**Special Junior Primary School
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Roll No. 201620

Sonas Child Protection Policy

Introduction

The staff, parents and management of **Sonas Special Junior Primary School** have developed and agreed this policy in line with the current recommendations and guidelines relating to child abuse prevention and child protection guidelines. This policy 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.

An individual copy of this policy document and the appended section from the Department of Education and Science Child Protection Guidelines and Procedures will be made available to all staff.

It is incumbent on all staff to familiarise themselves with ‘Children First: national guidance for the protection and welfare of children’ (2011) and the DES ‘Child Protection Guidelines and Procedures’.

Aims

This policy aims to:

- Create a safe, trusting, responsive and caring environment in which the welfare of the child is paramount.
- Provide a personal 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.
- Ensure that all staff members are aware of and familiar with the ‘Children First: national guidance for the protection and welfare of children’ (2011) 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 staff.

Prevention

Sonas provides an education for children aged 3-6 years with a diagnosis of Autistic Spectrum Disorder. The triad of Autism results in a deficit in the areas of Communication, Socialisation and Imagination. As a result, our child prevention programme focuses on providing a secure and transparent environment in which the children work. Whilst all of our children have a diagnosis of Autism, many also have learning difficulties. This vulnerability, particularly in the area of child protection, must be acknowledged and addressed through an appropriate Child Protection Policy (see attached Best Practice appendix).

We place great importance on the training and upskilling of staff in this area in the children's best interest.

Training has been accessed during the current academic year 2012-2013. A list of those staff who attended this training is attached.

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 Sonas Special Junior Primary 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. Each member of staff has received a hard copy of Circular 65/2011. Each member has also received an e-copy of:
 - Circular 0065/2011
 - Children First National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children
 - Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools
3. The Designated Liaison Person (DLP) is Bairbre Doyle.
4. The Deputy Designated Liaison Person is Karen Flowers.
5. In its policies, practices and activities, Sonas 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.

6. The following policies in place in our school support our Child Protection Policy:

- Code of Behaviour
- Supervision Policy
- Social Outings Policy
- Intimate Care Policy
- Swimming Policy
- Physical Contact Policy

Good Practice Procedures

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:

a) Physical Contact

We promote the development of each child's independent skills as much as possible during the day. Staff should avoid doing anything of a personal nature for children that they can do for themselves. While physical contact may be used to comfort, reassure or assist a child, the following will be factors in determining its appropriateness:

- Is it acceptable to the child?
- Is it open and not secretive?
- The age and developmental stage of the child.

b) Children with specific toileting/intimate care needs:

Where a child is not toilet-trained/independent in the use of the toilet, they will need assistance from a staff member. On no occasion, will a staff member go into a closed toilet with a child – the door will always be left ajar.

c) One-to-one teaching: It is the policy of the school that one-to-one teaching is often in the best interest of the child. This teaching will take place in an open environment.

d) Changing for Swimming

We encourage children to dress/undress independently where possible. In the case where a child needs assistance, this is done in the communal area. The showers area is also communal.

- e) SNAs must have Garda Clearance before appointment.
- f) Social Training and school outings: see Social Outings Policy

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. 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.

- 7. 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.
- 8. 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 _____

Signed: _____ Signed: _____

Chairperson of the Board of Management Principal

Date: _____ Date: _____

Date of next review: _____

Appendix 4

Checklist for Annual Review of the Child Protection Policy

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

As part of the overall review process, Boards of should also assess other school policies, practices and activities vis-à-vis their adherence to the principles of best practice in child protection and welfare as set out in the school's Child Protection Policy.

	Yes/No
Has the Board formally adopted a Child Protection Policy in accordance with the 'Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools'?	
As part of the school's Child Protection Policy, has the Boards formally adopted, without modification, the 'Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools'?	
Are there both a DLP and a Deputy DLP currently appointed?	
Are the relevant contact details (HSE and An Garda Síochána) to hand?	
Has the DLP attended available child protection training?	
Has the Deputy DLP attended available child protection training?	
Have any members of the Board attended child protection training?	
Has the school's Child Protection Policy identified other school policies, practices and activities that are regarded as having particular child protection relevance?	
Has the Board ensured that the Department's 'Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools' are available to all school personnel?	
Has the Board arrangements in place to communicate the school's Child Protection Policy to new school personnel?	
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'?	
Since the Board's last annual review, was the Board informed of any cases where the DLP sought advice from the HSE and as result of this advice , no report to the HSE was made?	
Is the Board satisfied that the child protection procedures in relation to the making of reports to the HSE/An Garda Síochána were appropriately followed?	
Were child protection matters reported to the Board appropriately recorded in the Board minutes?	
Is the Board satisfied that all records relating to child protection are appropriately filed and stored securely?	
Has the Board ensured that the Parent's Association has been provided with the school's Child Protection Policy?	
Has the Board ensured that the school's child protection policy is available to parents on request?	

Has the Board ensured that the school's Child Protection Policy is available to parents on request?	Yes/No
Has the Board ensured that the Stay Safe Programme is implemented in full in the school?	
Has the Board ensured that the SPHE curriculum is implemented in full in the school?	
Is the Board satisfied that the DES' requirements for Garda vetting have been met in respect of all school personnel?	
Is the Board satisfied that the DES' 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?	
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?	
Is the Board satisfied that the 'Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools' are being fully and adequately implemented by the school?	
Has the Board identified any aspects of the school's child protection policy and/or its implementation that require further improvement?	
Has the Board ensured put in place an action plan containing appropriate timelines to address those aspects of the school's Child Protection Policy and/or its implementation that have been identified as requiring further improvement?	
Has the Board ensured that any areas for improvement that were identified in any previous review of the school's Child Protection Policy have been adequately addressed?	

Signed _____

Date _____

Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed _____

Date _____

Principal

Notification regarding the Board of Management's annual review of the Child Protection Policy

To: _____

The Board of Management of Sonas Special Junior Primary School wishes to inform you that:

The Board of Management's annual review of the school's Child Protection Policy was completed at the Board meeting of _____ (date).

This review was conducted in accordance with the checklist set out in the DES guidelines re 'Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools'.

Signed _____

Date _____

Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed _____

Date _____

Principal

This policy was reviewed and ratified by Sonas Board of Management in September 2020