

An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna
Department of Education and Skills

Child Protection and Safeguarding Final Inspection

FINAL REPORT

Ainm na scoile / School name	St. Laurence's NS
Seoladh na scoile / School address	Roundwood Bray Co. Wicklow
Uimhir rolla / Roll number	16634H

Date of inspection: 23-01-2020



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agus Scileanna
Department of
Education and Skills

WHAT IS A CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING INSPECTION?

A Child Protection and Safeguarding Inspection (CPSI) is a focused inspection of the implementation of the *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary schools 2017*. These procedures provide direction and guidance to school authorities and to school personnel in relation to meeting their statutory obligations under the Children First Act 2015. They also provide direction and guidance in relation to the continued implementation of the best practice, non-statutory guidance set out in Children First National Guidance 2017. The CPSI inspection model examines the implementation of the *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary schools 2017* in schools through conducting ten checks based on the procedures.

The CPSI inspection process consists of two inspections: an **Initial Child Protection and Safeguarding Inspection** and a **Final Child Protection and Safeguarding Inspection**. The two inspections are typically carried out in a school within a relatively short timeframe. This is a report on a Final Child Protection and Safeguarding Inspection.

WHAT HAPPENS DURING A FINAL CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING INSPECTION?

During a final CPSI, inspectors:

- Engage with learners about their learning in Social Personal and Health Education (SPHE) and Stay Safe
- Conduct a focus group meeting with representatives of the parents' association / parent representatives on the board of management to explore issues relevant to school climate and parents' awareness of the school's child protection procedures, including the school's anti-bullying procedures
- Hold meetings with:
 - Designated Liaison Person (DLP) / Deputy DLP
 - Chairperson of board of management
 - A sample of school personnel
 - The SPHE coordinator
- Review the following documents:
 - Board of management minutes
 - Child safeguarding statement and risk assessment
 - Relevant school plans
- Review child protection records, where these have been created.

The board of management was given an opportunity to comment in writing on the findings and recommendations of the report; a response was not received from the board.

HOW TO READ THIS REPORT

The checks conducted during this inspection are based on the *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017*.

The first section of the report indicates the extent to which the school was compliant with each of the checks conducted by indicating, in respect of each of the stated checks, whether the school was:

- Fully compliant
- Substantially compliant
- Partially compliant
- Not compliant

Some of the checks may not be relevant to a particular school, for example a school that has never had a concern in relation to child protection will not have any child protection records. In such cases, the report indicates that the check does not apply to the school by stating *Not Applicable* after that particular check.

It should be noted that the term 'school personnel' as referred to in this inspection report is used as a generic term to cover all adults who are involved in the operation of the school. It covers employees and voluntary workers and includes parent association members when they are working in the school. These personnel include, for example, teachers, special needs assistants, caretakers, secretaries, cleaners, voluntary workers in the school, paid or voluntary tutors, and parent association members helping with aspects of the work of the school.

Where a school is less than fully compliant with a particular requirement, the report provides some additional evaluative comment on the check. It also advises actions that the school should take in order to comply more fully with the *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017*.

The report also provides an evaluative comment on the school's planning for and implementation of the Social Personal and Health Education Curriculum and the Stay Safe Programme/ Relationships and Sexuality Education Programme as evident during the inspection. In providing this overview, reference is made to the appropriate quality level of the Inspectorate's Quality Continuum:

- Very good
- Good
- Satisfactory
- Fair
- Weak

A *Guide to Child Protection and Safeguarding Inspections* was published on the website of the Department of Education and Skills in January 2019 and can be accessed at www.education.ie. This Guide details how CPSIs are carried out and also provides the framework used by inspectors in arriving at judgements about a school's compliance with the aspects of the *Child Protection Procedures 2017* that are checked during the inspection.

Child Protection and Safeguarding Inspection Report

The checks detailed below derive from the *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017*. These procedures are designed to ensure that schools provide a safe and secure environment for all our children and through appropriate curriculum provision, provide for the incremental development of the life skills that will empower students to keep themselves safe.

In order to meet these aims, the procedures set out a number of requirements on schools relating to communicating with members of the school community about child protection matters; training of school personnel and board members in respect of child protection; reporting about child protection to the board of management; and fulfilling certain reporting and record keeping obligations in relation to child protection matters. They also detail the mandatory aspects of the curriculum that are designed to develop students' knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviours through Social Personal and Health Education (SPHE) and the *Stay Safe* programme.

Aspects of the <i>Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017</i> checked	Fully Compliant Substantially Compliant Partially Compliant Not compliant Not applicable
1. The school has communicated the required aspects of the <i>Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017</i> to relevant stakeholders.	Fully Compliant
2. A Designated Liaison Person (DLP) and a deputy DLP have been appointed in line with the requirements of the <i>Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017</i> .	Fully Compliant
3. The board of management reports that it is aware of and discharges its responsibilities to provide information to all school personnel relevant to child protection and to ensure that available training is undertaken by all or some members of staff as required.	Fully Compliant
4. The board of management reports that it is aware of its responsibilities in relation to vetting of all school personnel and report that they discharge these responsibilities.	Fully Compliant
5. A child safeguarding statement and risk assessment have been prepared in line with the template and requirements of the <i>Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017</i> .	Fully Compliant
6. The minutes of the board meetings that were checked contained a record of a child protection oversight report being provided in line with the requirements of the <i>Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017</i> .	Fully Compliant
7. Correct record keeping procedures were found in the child protection cases examined.	Fully Compliant
8. The procedures to report child protection concerns were fully implemented in the records examined.	Substantially Compliant

- **Additional Information:**

In most cases the procedures to report child protection concerns were fully implemented. In the first of two exceptions, one file did not contain a record that the registered teacher was informed that advice was being sought from Tusla. Another file did not contain a written record from the DLP to the registered teacher stating the reasons why action was not taken, and advising that, if he or she remained concerned about the situation, he or she was free to consult with or report to Tusla.

- **Action Advised:**

For child protection cases that the DLP seeks the advice of Tusla on, the DLP should ensure that the child protection file contains a written record that the registered teacher was informed that Tusla’s advice was being sought.

For child protection cases that the DLP does not refer to Tusla, the DLP should ensure that the registered teacher is given a clear statement, in writing, as to the reasons why action is not being taken and advice that the teacher is free to consult with or report the case to Tusla if he or she remains concerned about the child.

9. The procedures to report allegations or suspicions of abuse against school personnel were fully implemented in the records examined.

Fully Compliant

(These personnel include, for example, teachers, special needs assistants, caretakers, secretaries, cleaners, voluntary workers in the school, paid or voluntary tutors, and parent association members helping with aspects of the work of the school.)

10. Curriculum Check

There is a programme for Social Personal and Health Education for all children in the school.

Yes

The Stay Safe Programme is implemented within the school

Yes

The overall quality of planning for, and implementation of, the SPHE curriculum and the *Stay Safe* programme, as evidenced during the inspection, is good. Individual teachers’ timetables indicate that appropriate time is allocated to the teaching of discrete SPHE lessons. The whole-school plan for SPHE provides an outline of when all three strands of the curriculum are delivered, and identifies the resources and supports to be used in the teaching of SPHE. An examination of teachers’ monthly progress records indicates that the strand unit *Growing and Changing* is covered less consistently than other strands and strand units.

The pupils who participated in the focus groups were able to speak about various types of bullying, emotions, friendships, road safety, and personal safety. Some of the pupils were able to share the key messages learned through the *Stay Safe* programme. Most of the pupils appeared unfamiliar with the strand unit *Growing and Changing* and displayed difficulty in discussing their learning in this area. The school are in the process of preparing a plan to further develop the strand *Growing and Changing*. The SPHE coordinator attended training in Relationships and Sexuality Education, and has worked with the teachers to agree appropriate teaching methodologies, resources, and an

incremental programme of work. The implementation of this programme should be monitored regularly to ensure consistency in the whole-school approach.