

An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna
Department of Education and Skills

Child Protection and Safeguarding Initial Inspection

INITIAL 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: 14-10-2019



An Roinn Oideachais
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 an Initial Child Protection and Safeguarding Inspection.

WHAT HAPPENS DURING AN INITIAL CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING INSPECTION?

During an initial CPSI, inspectors:

- Engage with learners about their learning in Social Personal and Health Education (SPHE) and Stay Safe
- Invite all parents to complete an online parent survey that explores 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 of the school was given an opportunity to comment in writing on the findings and recommendations of the report, and the response of the board will be found in the appendix of this report.

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
<p>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.</p>	Substantially Compliant
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional Information: <p>The school has communicated almost all of the required aspects of the <i>Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017</i> to relevant stakeholders. However, a copy of the written notification that the annual review of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement has taken place was not published on the school's website.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action Advised: <p>The board of management is advised to publish a copy of the written notification that the review of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement has taken place on the school's website.</p>	
<p>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>.</p>	Fully Compliant
<p>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.</p>	Substantially Compliant
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional Information: <p>It is evident that the board of management is aware of and makes conscientious efforts to discharge its responsibilities to provide information to all school personnel relevant to child protection and ensures that available training is undertaken by all or some members of staff as required. However, a small number of teachers were not fully aware of the responsibilities of a mandated person. In addition, a small number of the members of school personnel were not aware of the actions to take if they receive an allegation or have a suspicion that a child may have been abused or neglected, is being abused or neglected, or is at risk of abuse or neglect.</p>	

- **Action Advised:**

The board of management should ensure that all teachers are fully aware of the responsibilities of a mandated person and that all members of school personnel are aware of the actions to take if they receive an allegation or have a suspicion that a child may have been abused or neglected, is being abused or neglected, or is at risk of abuse or neglect.

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 *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017*.

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 *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017*.

Fully Compliant

7. Correct record keeping procedures were found in the child protection cases examined.

Partially Compliant

- **Additional Information:**

While correct record keeping procedures were found in the most recent child protection files examined, some earlier child protection files did not contain the names of all relevant individuals. Additionally, all parties referenced in files, whose identity if disclosed might lead to the identification of a child or a person against whom an allegation has been made, have not been assigned a unique identifier number.

- **Action Advised:**

The DLP should ensure that all child protection files contain the names of all relevant individuals and that all parties referenced in files, whose identity if disclosed might lead to the identification of a child or a person against whom an allegation has been made, are assigned a unique identifier number.

8. The procedures to report child protection concerns were fully implemented in the records examined.

Substantially Compliant

- **Additional Information:**

It is evident from the files reviewed that, in almost all cases, the procedures to report child protection concerns were fully implemented. One file did not contain a written record that the registered teacher was informed that advice was being sought from Tusla.

- **Action Advised:**

The DLP should ensure that there is a record that the registered teacher was informed that Tusla's advice was being sought.

<p>9. The procedures to report allegations or suspicions of abuse against school personnel were fully implemented in the records examined.</p> <p><i>(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.)</i></p>	<p>Fully Compliant</p>
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<p>10. Curriculum Check</p>	
<p>There is a programme for Social Personal and Health Education for all children in the school.</p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p>The <i>Stay Safe</i> Programme is implemented within the school.</p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p>The overall quality of planning for, and implementation of, the SPHE curriculum and the <i>Stay Safe</i> programme, as evidenced during the inspection, is good. Individual teachers' timetables indicate that the 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 to be 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 <i>Growing and Changing</i> is covered less consistently than other strands and strand units.</p> <p>The pupils who participated in the focus groups were able to speak about various types of bullying, road safety, and personal safety. Some pupils were able to share the key messages learned through participation in the <i>Stay Safe</i> programme. They appeared unfamiliar with the strand unit <i>Growing and Changing</i> and displayed difficulty in discussing their learning in this area. Parents who responded to the survey displayed very high levels of agreement with the statements that their child learns about bullying in the school and participates in the <i>Stay Safe</i> Programme. Significantly lower levels of agreement were displayed in responses that their child learned about Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) in school.</p> <p>The planned review of the whole-school plan for SPHE is timely and will allow the school to ensure that all aspects of the programme are covered appropriately. The plan should provide greater clarity on how all three strands of the curriculum, especially <i>Growing and Changing</i>, are to be delivered and the implementation of this programme should be monitored regularly to ensure consistency in the whole-school approaches.</p>	

Appendix

SCHOOL RESPONSE TO THE REPORT

Submitted by the Board of Management

Area 1 Observations on the content of the inspection report

All teachers and the Board of Management members are satisfied that the report reflects the inspection carried out in St Laurence O'Toole's National School.

Area 2 Follow-up actions planned or undertaken since the completion of the inspection activity to implement the findings and recommendations of the inspection.

The following actions have been taken following on from the recommendations contained within the report. Each action is listed according to the checks within the report:

Check 1:

A written notification has been published on the school website roundwoodns.ie to inform parents that a review of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement has taken place.

Check 3:

All teachers in the school have been made aware of their responsibilities as a mandated person and the actions which they have to take if they receive an allegation or have a suspicion that a child may have been abused, neglected or at risk of being so. This took place as an information session involving questions and answers for all teachers. The Child Protection Procedures were highlighted as a source of information for each teacher to use a guideline and copies of the procedures are available and easily accessible to all teachers.

Check 7:

The DLP has ensured that each person referenced in child protection files has been assigned a unique identifier number as per guidelines.

Check 8:

The DLP has informed and recorded that a registered teacher was informed that the advice of Tusla was being sought.

Check 10:

The area of Relationships and Sexuality Education is in the process of being reviewed on a whole school basis. One member of staff has received CPD in RSE and this will enhance the school's ability to develop a well thought-out, structured approach to the teaching of RSE across all classes in the school. There has been time set aside during term 2 within Croke Park hours to develop the school's RSE policy. The school SPHE plan is in the process of being updated to ensure that there is greater consistency throughout the school in relation to SPHE planning, teaching and learning. The teaching of particular strands over a two-year cycle will form the basis for the plan. New resources have been acquired to aid teaching and improve overall learning opportunities for pupils within the area of SPHE.