

An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna
Department of Education and Skills

Child Protection and Safeguarding Initial Inspection

INITIAL REPORT

Ainm na scoile / School name	St Raphael's Special School
Seoladh na scoile / School address	Clane Road Celbridge
Uimhir rolla / Roll number	18988G

Date of inspection: 30-09-2019



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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 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
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.	Substantially Compliant

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional Information: The school operates a praiseworthy pastoral care system which documents routine staff observations about students' health and wellbeing. The principal liaises proactively and routinely with parents and relevant professionals in relation to these matters. The labelling of records of these observations suggests that they are of a child protection nature; however, staff indicate that these observations, as documented, relate only to matters that do not meet the threshold for mandatory reporting under the mandatory national procedures for reporting child protection concerns. • Action Advised: The school needs to clearly delineate the distinction between its internal system of recording pastoral care observations that do not meet the threshold for reporting under the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017 and the separate process of mandatory reporting. This distinction should be informed by section 2.2 of the <i>Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017</i> which outlines reasonable causes for concern in relation to child protection. 	
8. The procedures to report child protection concerns were fully implemented in the records examined.	Not Applicable
9. The procedures to report allegations or suspicions of abuse against school personnel were fully implemented in the records examined. <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>	Not Applicable

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
<p>The overall quality of planning for and implementation of the SPHE curriculum and the Stay Safe programme, as evidenced during the inspection is good. The school aspires to supporting its students to be active participants in their community and this is promoted well through the very positive and supportive interactions observed during the evaluation.</p> <p>An in-school leadership role has been allocated to the co-ordination of SPHE. Provision for SPHE, RSE and <i>Stay Safe</i> is guided by whole-school plans which outline the topics to be taught and the methodologies to be used. In some instances, further reference to the <i>Guidelines for Teachers of Students with General Learning Disabilities</i> would provide additional guidance in modifying curricular provision for individual needs. It is commendable that planning for aspects of SPHE and RSE provision is linked to the individualised planning process for students.</p> <p>Teachers' planning and progress records indicate consistent implementation of the SPHE curriculum although there is scope to give further attention to <i>Growing and Changing</i> in some settings. During their focus group meeting, a</p>	

sample of students with diverse learning needs displayed appropriate knowledge about *personal safety* and *friendship* through a range of communication methods including Lámh, visuals and information and communications technology (ICT). Responding to the Inspectorate questionnaires, almost all parents agreed or strongly agreed that they feel welcome in the school and that their children are safe and treated fairly in school. All parents agreed that the school helps their children to develop social and personal skills. As responses from a significant minority of parents indicate that they are not aware of the RSE and/or *Stay Safe* programmes their children are learning, the school should ensure that this information is communicated more effectively to all parents.

Appendix

SCHOOL RESPONSE TO THE REPORT

Submitted by the Board of Management

Area 1 Observations on the content of the inspection report

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

A Holistic Care Protocol has been devised by the school. This now clearly delineates the distinction between its internal system of recording Holistic care observations and the separate process of mandatory reporting. Holistic care forms are completed by staff to monitor the welfare and well-being of our pupils. Staff are fully aware that these observations could trigger a concern under Child Protection and then the Child Protection procedures are fully implemented and documented separately.

A hard copy of the school's RSE policy and SPHE curriculum plan, which includes the Stay Safe Programme, was sent to all parents on 11 April 2019. In the same letter, parents were advised of our Anti-bullying that is available to view on the school's website.

All pupils have a Safeguarding/Positive Behaviour Management Strategy which would include a lot of the elements of the SPHE/RSE curriculum. Each individual Safeguarding/Positive Behaviour Management Strategy is signed by parents as well as school staff. Parents were asked to give their input prior to signing the Strategy.

At a meeting of the School Parents Association on 13 February 2019 the Principal encouraged parents to look at www.staysafe.ie and to contact the school if there were any queries. A leaflet has been sent to all parents outlining how the SPHE/RSE and Stay Safe programmes are implemented and taught in our school.