

An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna
Department of Education and Skills

Child Protection and Safeguarding Initial Inspection

INITIAL REPORT

Ainm na scoile / School name	St Oliver Plunketts NS
Seoladh na scoile / School address	Newcastle Athenry Co. Galway
Uimhir rolla / Roll number	19449E

Date of inspection: 01-10-2019



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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> .	Substantially Compliant
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional Information: A comprehensive child protection oversight report is provided to each board meeting. The board correctly considers cases which were not reported to TUSLA and the minutes correctly use the unique code to refer to these cases. However, the board minutes do not specify the documents provided to the board meeting and considered by the board in respect of these cases. 	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action Advised: Minutes of board meetings that consider child protection cases which were not reported to TUSLA should specify the documents relevant to these cases that are provided to the board meeting. 	
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.	Fully Compliant
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 (SPHE) 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 (SPHE) curriculum and the Stay Safe programme, as evidenced during the inspection, is good.</p> <p>The school has a comprehensive whole-school plan for SPHE. The plan reflects the approaches and methodologies of the SPHE curriculum and outlines a programme for the delivery of the key elements of SPHE including Relationship and Sexuality Education (RSE), <i>Stay Safe</i> and substance abuse.</p> <p>A review of a sample of teachers' monthly progress records does not indicate that all classes receive a balanced programme in SPHE. Teachers are advised to ensure that they plan for and deliver a balanced programme in SPHE that contains topics from all three strands of the curriculum. Teachers should take particular care to ensure that aspects of the curriculum not covered in a particular year are included when the teacher is organising the plan for the following year.</p> <p>During the pupil group discussion held during the inspection, the pupils demonstrated a good understanding of topics from SPHE and Stay Safe such as <i>Taking Care of your Body, Growing and Changing, Secrets and Telling and Touches</i>.</p> <p>The majority of parents who completed the parent questionnaires administered as part of this inspection agreed or strongly agreed that their child is safe and well looked after in the school and is treated with respect by teachers. A significant minority of these parents indicated that they did not know if their child learns about relationship and sexuality or does the <i>Stay Safe</i> Programme in school. While the school has communication procedures in place to inform parents about the RSE Programme and the <i>Stay Safe</i> Programme, it should review the effectiveness of this communication.</p>	

Appendix

SCHOOL RESPONSE TO THE REPORT

Submitted by the Board of Management

Part A Observations on the content of the inspection report

The Board of Management welcomes the positive findings of this Initial Child Protection and Safeguarding Inspection.

The Board is very satisfied that Child Protection concerns are dealt with seriously and are treated with the utmost sensitivity in our school. Our pupils are encouraged to ask for help when they need it. This generally happens as a result of the excellent pupil teacher relations which permeate our school. Wellbeing has therefore, always been the primary focus of our child-centred school.

The Board of Management will endeavour to ensure that all recommendations made by the inspectors are implemented.

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

Since our Inspection the following actions have been taken to heighten awareness of parents to the teaching of all aspects of the SPHE curriculum

- The links to SPHE and other related policies such as Stay Safe, RSE, Substance Misuse, Anti-Bullying, Code of Behaviour and Equality, Access and Participation have been highlighted on the school website.
- A newsletter informing all stakeholders of the outcome of the inspection was circulated. It provided a link to www.ncca.ie to encourage parents to view the revised Stay Safe and RSE programmes to increase their knowledge of the content to be taught.
- Teachers are engaging in reflective practices to ensure that where gaps are found in the delivery of any area of last year's SPHE curriculum teachers will ensure that this content is taught this year.
- Teachers are reviewing their long term SPHE plans in line with the whole school two year plan to ensure there is a balance in the delivery of all the strands in the SPHE curriculum for the year ahead.
- Teachers will prepare outlines of lesson content in Stay Safe for Junior/Senior Infants, 1st and 2nd, 3rd and 4th and 5th/6th. This will be sent to parents in December with a letter about the Stay Safe Programme. This will inform parents of the specific content that will be taught during January and February.
- Teachers will work together to create a presentation on Media Education. This will be presented to the pupils in December.
- Pupils from 2nd class upwards will purchase a hard back copy for use over the five years. Infants to 1st class will record their SPHE work in a booklet or scrapbook. This will be a record of their learning and of the home school communication related to the delivery of the SPHE curriculum.
- The school will endeavour to further heighten awareness of parents to the teaching of all aspects of the SPHE curriculum. The Principal will organise a community of practice, by hosting an information evening for parents, staff and the wider community of this school and of other schools, with particular emphasis on Stay Safe and RSE.
- The remaining Child Protection report will be presented at the October Board meeting. The Board of Management minutes will specify the documents provided to the meeting and considered by the board in respect of this case and henceforth this will be our practice.