

Child Protection Monitoring by the Inspectorate

Context

The Department of Education and Skills published new *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017* in December 2017, following the commencement of all sections of the *Children First Act 2015*.

- A fundamental principle of the *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017* is that all schools must keep pupils/students safe from harm while attending the school or while participating in school activities. In this regard, the Procedures outline four main types of abuse: neglect, emotional abuse, physical abuse and sexual abuse
- Boards of management and principals of schools are responsible for fully implementing the *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017*
- School patrons have an oversight and quality assurance role in the implementation of these procedures by boards of management
- The patron has particular responsibilities when allegations of abuse are made against a school employee or against a member of the board of management
- The Department of Education and Skills is responsible for developing child protection procedures for schools. The Department has also put in place a range of oversight measures to quality assure these procedures.

Child protection and school inspection

As part of the Department's oversight measures, the Inspectorate checks on compliance with the key aspects of the *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017* during **all** school inspections. The level of checks on compliance depends on the inspection being conducted.

- **Level one checks** are undertaken in the course of incidental inspections, curriculum evaluations, subject inspections, programme evaluations, evaluations of provision for pupils with special educational needs and follow-through inspections.
- **Level two checks** are undertaken in the course of whole-school evaluations (WSE), WSE-MLLs, Evaluation of Action Planning for Improvement in DEIS Schools, Evaluation of Centres for Education (Youthreach) and Evaluation of Schools at Special Care Units and Child Detention Centres
- **Level three checks** are undertaken in the course of the Child Protection and Safeguarding Inspection (CPSI) model. This is a bespoke inspection model which focuses in an in-depth way at a school's compliance with the 2017 child protection procedures.

The table below provides details of level one and level two checks undertaken in the course of inspection. You can access the Guide to Child Protection and Safeguarding Inspections [here](#). This Guide contains the checks and sub-checks conducted during CPSI inspections.

Child Protection Checks Undertaken During School Inspections		
Level	Primary Inspection Models	Checks undertaken
One	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Incidental Inspection 2. Curriculum Evaluation 3. Evaluation of Provision for Pupils with Special Educational Needs – Primary 4. Follow Through Inspection 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The name of the DLP and the Child Safeguarding Statement are prominently displayed near the main entrance to the school. 2. The Child Safeguarding Statement has been ratified by the board and includes an annual review and a risk assessment. 3. All teachers visited reported that they have read the Child Safeguarding Statement and that they are aware of their responsibilities as mandated persons.
	Post-Primary Inspection Models	
One	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Incidental Inspection 2. Subject Inspection 3. Programme Evaluation 4. Evaluation of Provision for Students with Special Educational Needs – Post-Primary 5. Follow-Through Inspection 	
Level	Primary Inspection Models	Checks undertaken
Two	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Whole-School Evaluation 2. Whole-School Evaluation – Management, Leadership and Learning 3. Evaluation of Action Planning for Improvement in DEIS Schools 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The name of the DLP and the Child Safeguarding Statement are prominently displayed near the main entrance to the school. 2. The Child Safeguarding Statement has been ratified by the board and includes an annual review and a risk assessment. 3. All teachers visited reported that they have read the Child Safeguarding Statement and that they are aware of their responsibilities as mandated persons. 4. The Child Safeguarding Statement meets the requirements of the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017. 5. The records of the last three board of management meetings record a child protection oversight report that meet the requirements of the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary schools 2017. 6. The board of management has ensured that arrangements are in place to provide information to all school personnel on the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools, 2017 7. School planning documentation indicates that the school is making full provision for the relevant aspects of the curriculum (SPHE, Stay Safe, RSE). 8. Child protection records are maintained in a secure location.
	Post-Primary Inspection Models	
Two	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Whole-School Evaluation – Management, Leadership and Learning 2. Evaluation of Action Planning for Improvement in DEIS Schools 3. Evaluation of Centres for Education (Youthreach) 4. Evaluation of Schools at Special Care Units and Child Detention Centres 	

In order for a school to be compliant with check 7 above 'School planning documentation indicates that the school is making full provision for the relevant aspects of the curriculum (SPHE, Stay Safe, RSE) the school must be compliant with each of the following sub-checks:

Primary Schools	Post-Primary Schools
Does the school plan indicate that aspects of each of the three strands of the SPHE curriculum are covered each year?	Is SPHE timetabled for each year of the junior cycle?
Does the school plan indicate that the Stay Safe Programme is delivered at least once in Junior Infants / Senior Infants; once in first or second class; once in third or fourth class and once in fifth or sixth class?	Is SPHE timetabled for a minimum of 70 hours across the three years of Junior Cycle?
Does the school plan indicate that the Stay Safe Programme is taught in its entirety over one school year?	Does the school implement a RSE programme for all students, from First Year to Sixth Year?
Does the school plan indicate that all children have access to the RSE programme each year?	Are a minimum of five to six timetabled periods per year assigned to RSE in relevant plans?
	Have outline programme of work been prepared for 1st, 2nd & 3rd Year SPHE and 4th, 5th & 6th Year RSE?
	Does the overall RSE plan include provision for the exploration of important aspects of RSE, for example, family planning, sexually transmitted infections and sexual orientation?