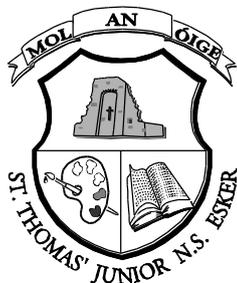


# ST. THOMAS' JUNIOR NATIONAL SCHOOL



Esker, Lucan, Co. Dublin.

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**Roll No.:** 19542r



## Child Protection Policy at St. Thomas' J. N. S.

Schools have an obligation to provide students with the highest possible standard of care in order to promote their well being and protect them from harm. School personnel are well placed to observe changes in behaviour, failure to develop or outward signs of abuse in children.

- Mindful of this duty of care, the Board of Management of St. Thomas' J.N.S. fully endorses "Children First", the designated guidelines for the protection and welfare of children issued by the Department of health and Children, September 1999 **and** "Child Protection Guidelines and Procedures" issued by the Department of Education and Science in April 2001.
- The Board nominates Mr. Michael Maher as the Designated Liaison Person (DLP) to act as a liaison with outside agencies such as health boards and as a resource person to any staff having child protection concerns.
- In the absence of Mr. Michael Maher Ms. Maura Egan will act as Deputy Designated Liaison Person.
- The Board will ensure that appropriate and on going training as necessary will be available for the DLP and the DDLP
- The Board fully endorses arrangements for the vetting of teaching and non-teaching staff as outlined in Circular 0094/2006 from the Department of Education and Science in June 2006.
- Recognising that the safety and well-being of children attending the school is a priority, the Board undertakes to include (a) Child Protection and (b) Health and Safety matters as items on the agenda of all Board of Management meetings forthwith.
- The Board will ensure that all school staff, teaching and non-teaching, are aware of their obligations under the guidelines detailed in "Children First" and the procedures to be followed in the event of concern.
- Local Procedures for the implementation of "Children First" guidelines in St. Thomas' J.N.S. have been drafted in consultation with all the educational partners (staff, Board, Parents Association). Copy of same attached.
- The Board recognizes that it has two duties of care. The primary duty is the protection, safety and welfare of the children attending St. Thomas' J.N.S. The Board as an employer also has duties and responsibilities towards its employees.
- As an employer, the Board will seek legal advice if an allegation of abuse is made against a school employee.

- The Board will adhere to the protocol outlined in “Child Protection Guidelines and Procedures, Department of Education and Science, 2001 under Chapter 4: “Allegations or Suspicions of Child Abuse by School Employees”, to authorize any actions required to protect the children in its care. The Board notes that school employees may be subject to erroneous or malicious allegations. Any allegation of abuse should be dealt with sensitively. The employee should be treated fairly which includes the right not to be judged in advance of a full and fair enquiry. The Board accepts that the principles of natural justice and fair procedures must be adhered to.
- The Board believes that the academic, personal and social development of children flourishes in a culture where good relationships are encouraged, people feel valued and respected, and appropriate support is available for those in difficulty.
- The Board is committed to the maintenance of an environment where children feel secure, where they are encouraged to express themselves and are listened to. All children in the school will be made aware that there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried. In addition, opportunities will be included in the curriculum for children to develop the skills they need to keep them safe. The Stay Safe Programme will be taught developmentally to all children in Senior Infants, 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> classes within the context of S.P.H.E. The S.P.H.E. programme provides safety skills at Junior Infant level also.
- Parents / Guardians are encouraged to discuss the content covered in class through worksheets which are sent home in booklet form to be signed by them.
- The Board of Management undertakes to circulate this Child Protection policy statement to all parents and guardians at the time of enrolment and on a regular basis thereafter. This policy statement and “Children First” will also be available at the school office.
- The policy statement regarding Child Protection at St. Thomas’ J.N.S. applies to all staff, members of the Board of Management, volunteers and contractors working in the school.
- Copies of this policy statement will also be given to all groups who rent the halls outside of school hours and for whom “Children First” guidelines apply.
- This policy statement will be subject to review at the start of each academic year forthwith.

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Chairperson**

\_\_\_\_\_ **D.L.P.**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Deputy D.L.P.**

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

