



## **CHILD PROTECTION POLICY**

### **CHILDREN FIRST**

- The safety and welfare of our pupils is the primary concern of all in Belgrove Senior Girls' School.
- The Board of Management has adopted as school policy the Child Protection Guidelines and Procedures introduced by the Dept. of Education and Science, in relation to Child Protection and Welfare and we adhere to these guidelines. These guidelines promote the welfare of children and, in turn, are in line with the national guidelines "Children First" published by the Dept. of Health and Children.
- "Children First" prioritises the protection and welfare of the child above any other concern. Consequently, if there is a matter of concern in relation to abuse of children, we are obliged to report this to the Northern Area Health Board. They will assess the case and provide the necessary support for the child concerned.
- In "Children First", child abuse is categorised into four different types: neglect, emotional abuse, physical abuse and sexual abuse.
- Each school must delegate a Designated Liaison Person (DLP), to whom school staff report concerns in relation to abuse. The DLP for this school is the Principal, Anne McCarthy and the deputy DLP is Aoife Nic Lughadha.
- If the person making the report and the DLP are satisfied that there are reasonable grounds for the suspicion or allegation of abuse, the DLP will report the matter to the Northern Area Health Board as soon as possible. The Health Board recommends that the report be made in writing on a standard yellow reporting form. The DLP would also seek to speak in person, or by phone, to the duty social worker.
- The DLP will also consult the Health Board for advice regarding concerns for a child, even if not at that stage making an official report.
- The Chairperson of the Board of Management is informed if a report is being made to the Health Board.
- If a report were being made in an emergency situation and Health Board staff were unavailable, the report would be made to the Gardaí.
- The child's Parents or Guardian will be informed if a report is being made unless doing so is likely to endanger the child or place the child at further risk.

- Confidentiality is of extreme importance. All information regarding concerns of possible child abuse should be shared only on a need to know basis in the interests of the child.

**Information for Teaching Staff:**

- All Teaching Staff have been supplied with a copy of Chapter 2 of the DES Child Protection Guidelines and Procedure, which details the responsibilities of all school personnel.
- Teachers have also been supplied with a copy of the following sections of the “Children First” National Guidelines:
  - Chapter 3: Definition and Recognition of Child Abuse
  - Appendix 1: Signs and Symptoms of Abuse

**Stay Safe Programme:**

- The Stay Safe Child Abuse Prevention Programme is taught in this school as an integral element of Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE).
- The main lesson of the Stay Safe Programme for all children who find themselves in an unsafe situation is “Say No, Get away, Tell an adult you trust, Keep telling until someone listens to you”.

If there is a child protection issue, contact

Duty Social Work Department,  
Mountjoy Square

Tel: (01) 8566856

Our health centre is:  
Vernon Ave  
Tel (01) 8539500

Area Manager: TUSLA

Tel (01) 846 7129  
Fax: (01) 846 7524

*January 2017*