

Robertstown National School

INFORMATION PACK

Chairperson's Name: Aidan Watson

Inspector's Name: Eamonn Clavin

NUMBER OF TEACHERS: 14

NUMBER OF STUDENTS: 221

Other teachers working with pupils in this class

Name(s)	Role
CLAIRE POOLE	SET
AOIFE COUGHLAN	SET
SHEILA KILLEEN	SET
KIRSTIN CONROY	SET

Staff List

Teachers	Post	Class(es)
MARION SHERLOCK	PRINCIPAL	
AOIFE COUGHLAN	SDP	SET
FIDELMA MURPHY	SDP	Third Class
CLAIRE POOLE		SET
SHEILA KILLEEN		SET
SEAN FLANAGAN		Career Break
EDEL KELLY		Second Class
STEPHEN DONOVAN		Sixth Class
JENNY ENNIS		Junior Infants
KIRSTIN CONROY		SET
LIZZIE DE ARAUGO		Senior Infants
CLAR MAGRANE		Junior Infants
WILLIAM O'DONOGHUE		Fourth Class
EDWARD FITZGERALD		First Class
SHANE BRENNAN		Fifth Class

Support Staff

Name(s)	Duties
DEIDRE ANDERSON	CAREER BREAK
SHEILA LYNCH	SNA
OLIVE GARRY	SNA
MARIA MORAN	SNA
PATRICIA FITZSIMON	SNA

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MONA JACOB	SECRETARY
JOHN MC NAMEE	CARETAKER

Other Staff

Category	Name	Room
INTO Staff Representative	CLAIRE POOLE	Resource 3
Designated Liaison Person	MARION SHERLOCK	Office
Deputy DLP	AOIFE COUGHLAN	Resource 1

School Calendar / Dates for your Diary

Event	
SEE WEBSITE	www.robertstownns.ie
SEE FACEBOOK PAGE	Rns Notices

Daily Arrangements

Event	Time	Arrangements
Arrival of Pupils Gate opens	8:50 8:50 – 9:00	TEACHER MEETS PUPILS AT CLASSROOM HOMEWORK IS TAKEN UP AND CORRECTED
Coffee Break - <i>Arrangements for Teachers' Break</i>	Time 10:30 TO 10:45	PUPILS EAT IN CLASSROOM BEFORE LINING UP INSIDE CLASSROOM BEFORE LEAVING ROOM TO GO TO YARD.
Coffee Break - <i>Arrangements for Pupil Supervision</i>		2 TEACHERS AND ALL S.N.S.'S ARE ON YARD EACH DAY CHECK ROTA IN STAFF ROOM
Lunch Break – <i>Arrangements for lunch break</i>	Time 12:15 TO 12:40	PUPILS EAT IN ROOM UNTIL 2ND BELL, TO GO TO YARD. PUPILS LINE UP IN CLASSROOM BEFORE LEAVING ROOM FOOD WASTE (cores/peels only) IN COMPOST BIN, ALL OTHER RUBBISH AND UNEATEN FOOD TO BE TAKEN HOME BY CHILDREN
Lunch Break - <i>Arrangements for Pupil Supervision</i>		SEE ROTA IN STAFF ROOM
Wet Days <i>Arrangements</i>		PUPILS REMAIN IN ROOM. TEACHER ORGANISES ACTIVITIES
Access to toilets during lunch break		PUPILS NEED PERMISSION FROM TEACHER ON DUTY
Accidents		Minor injury: ONLY USE WATER TO WASH MINOR WOUND AND REPORT INCIDENT TO CLASS TEACHER AND PARENT SEE FIRST AID POLICY

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	Serious Injury: GET HELP AND REPORT TO CLASS TEACHER AND PARENT SEE FIRST AID POLICY ALL ACCIDENTS TO BE RECORDED SERIOUS ACCIDENTS REPORTED TO PRINCIPAL Reporting: INCIDENT BOOK IN FIRST AID BOX	
Pupil Illnesses	USE TEXT A PARENT SERVICE ON ALADDIN SCHOOLS TO INFORM PARENT OF ANY ILLNESS. SEND NOTE TO OFFICE, MONA WILL SEND SMS, IF TEACHER IS UNABLE TO.	
Arrangements for escorting Infants off the premises	Time 1:35	ESCORT PUPILS TO FRONT GATE
Arrangements for escorting pupils off the premises	Time 2:35	SUPERVISE ALL PUPILS TO FRONT GATE
End of Day	PLEASE ASK EACH CHILD TO CLEAN THE FLOOR AREA AROUND THEIR DESK BEFORE THEY LEAVE THE CLASSROOM	
Homework Policy <i>Journal, weekend homework...</i> <i>Recommended times per class group</i>	SEE HOMEWORK POLICY ON NETWORK Jun Infants 0 – 10 minutes Sen Infants Up to 20 minutes First Up to 30 minutes Second Up to 40 minutes Third Up to 50 minutes Fourth Up to 1 hour Fifth Up to 1 hour 15 minutes Sixth Up to 1 hour 30 minutes It is the schools policy to correct all homework that is given to children. Feedback should also be given to parents on occasion.	
Health & Safety Issues <i>Essentials</i>	Complete statement available in... STAFF NET WORK ALL PUPILS MUST BE SIGNED IN AND OUT OUTSIDE OF NORMAL SCHOOL HOURS	
Policies and Practices	Code of Behaviour. SEE WEBSITE AND NETWORK	
Partnership in our school	Parents – their involvement in activities PARENTS ARE ALWAYS ENCOURAGED TO PARTICIPATE IN SCHOOL ACTIVITIES AT VARIOUS TIMES THROUGHOUT THE YEAR	
Your Pupils	Class/Group	Name LIST ON ALADDIN SCHOOLS OR FROM MONA

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Class Roll <i>Procedures for Calling</i>	ROLL SHOULD BE CALLED AND RECORDED ALADDIN SCHOOL BY 10am.
Recording Absences <i>Procedures</i>	LETTERS FROM PARENTS ARE RECORDED ON ALADDIN SCHOOLS AND SENT TO MONA IN THE OFFICE (these are kept while the child is in education).
Daily Attendance <i>Procedures for Collection of Numbers</i>	THIS IS RECORDED ON ALADDIN SCHOOL
Information from previous teacher <i>How to access files and where files are stored</i>	ALL RESULTS OF TESTS FROM SET TEACHERS
Classroom Rules/Routines and Systems	RULES SHOULD BE DISPLAYED IN ROOM AND PUPILS REMINDED OF THESE FREQUENTLY
Procedures when leaving the classroom	NEVER LEAVE CLASS UNATTENDED. SNA OR TEACHER NEXT DOOR WILL SUPERVISE WHEN NECESSARY
Who to call on for immediate advice, help etc.	MENTORS OR TEACHER NEXT DOOR PRINCIPAL IS ALWAYS HAPPY TO OFFER ADVICE WHEN NECESSARY
Materials/resources available for the teacher <i>Location and access arrangements</i>	PE EQUIPMENT IN STORAGE ROOM MUSIC EQUIPMENT IN STORAGE ROOM SCIENCE EQUIPMENT IN STORAGE ROOM MATHS EQUIPMENT IN STORAGE ROOM

- ✓ ALL POLICIES ARE AVAILABLE ON NETWORK OR FROM OFFICE
- ✓ PARENT/ TEACHER MEETINGS ARE HELD IN FEBRUARY
- ✓ ALWAYS LOCK AWAY LAPTOPS EACH EVENING
- ✓ FILTERS ON INTERACTIVE BOARDS MUST BE CLEANED EVERY WEEK

Information on the Board of Management

The Board is made up of the following people:

- Two direct nominees of the Patron
- Two parents of children enrolled in the school (one being a mother, the other a father) elected by the general body of parents of children enrolled in the school
- The Principal teacher of the school
- One other teacher on the staff of the school, elected by vote of the teaching staff
- Plus two extra members proposed unanimously by the above nominees

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In our school, Aidan Watson is the Chairman of the Board, Liam Murphy and Caroline Howard are our parent representatives. Aoife O'Sullivan (Stephen Donovan) is the teacher representative, Darragh Fitzpatrick and Wendy Tighe (resigned) represent the Trustees. Fr. Byrne represents the Patron of the school.

The Board is responsible for the management of the School and promoting its success in all its activities so that the highest quality of education is delivered to all the pupils.

The school operates an open-door policy for parents. Should you have any concerns about your child, it is always best to talk to the class teacher or the Principal as soon as possible. This is where issues can best be dealt with. The school has an agreed procedure for dealing with matters of concern. This is available in the school office.

Parents Association

The Parents Association consists of:

Delia Lynch	Frances Whelan
Suzanne Dodson	Jean Noone

Code of Behaviour

Aims:

The code aims at:

Creating a caring, ordered environment based on respect and tolerance where each child can feel secure and confident.

Strategies to promote Positive Behaviour:

- * Ensuring that pupils are treated fairly, equally and firmly
- * A quiet word or gesture to show approval
- * Matching work with pupil's abilities. A prize/reward carefully noted by the teacher to ensure that all children at regular stages during the school year are rewarded for effort/behaviour/skill etc. Teacher's creating moments of success and then acknowledging them.
- * A comment in a pupil's exercise book
- * A visit to another member of staff or the Principal for commendation
- * A word of praise in front of a group or class
- * Entry of good behaviour is recorded
- * Delegating some responsibility or privilege
- * A mention to a parent - written or verbal
- * Teacher records improvement in the behaviour of a disruptive pupil
- * Implementation of Programmes such as Circle Time to promote positive behaviour

The above list is not comprehensive and consists of examples only.

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SCHOOL RULES

Golden Rules:

Children cannot remember long lists of rules. The rules outlined in this policy provide clear guidelines for members of our school community and senior pupils as to what type of behaviour is expected of pupils and adults within our school. The Golden Rules of the Circle Time programme are on display throughout the school. These rules outline for the children what is expected of them, in a language they understand and incorporate our school motto 'Show Respect and Expect Respect'. Children from Junior Infants - 6th classes will be reminded of these rules and will discuss them regularly. It is expected that the children will know them by 2nd class.

Be Gentle	Don't hurt anyone
Be kind and helpful	Don't hurt people's feelings
Be honest	Don't cover up the truth
Work hard	Don't waste time
Look after property	Don't waste or damage things or take things that don't belong to you / wait your turn to talk
Listen to people	Don't interrupt

School Rules:

School rules are devised with regard to the health, safety and welfare of all members of the school community. It is imperative that adults "practise what they preach" in their interaction with children every day. The School Rules listed below provide clear guidelines for all members of the school community.

- * Pupils enter and leave the school building at all times in an orderly fashion.
- * In the interest of safety pupils must walk within the school building and quietness is expected while children are getting ready to enter/exit class i.e. while queuing, while putting on coats in cloakrooms etc.
- * Pupils are expected to treat all staff members, themselves and each other with due respect and courtesy. Pupils are taught to stand back for an adult, to welcome visitors and to show respect for their elders.
- * Bullying is never allowed. Any behaviour that interferes with the rights of others to learn and to be safe is unacceptable.
- * Bad language is unacceptable. Inappropriate language if used towards a teacher or anywhere within the school is considered a serious breach of the code.
- * We encourage pupils to wear their full school uniform which includes tie and shoes. Black trainers only to be worn with tracksuits.
- * Chewing gum, glass bottles, correction fluids, other solvents, matches, cigarettes, alcohol or drugs are not allowed.
- * Jewellery is not allowed except for one small stud earring in the bottom of each ear and a watch.
- * Make-up is not worn during school times
- * Cycling in school grounds is forbidden

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- * We encourage children to bring healthy lunches (see Healthy Lunch Policy)
- * Children are not allowed Mobile phones within the school grounds. If a child is found with a mobile phone it will be confiscated. In exceptional circumstances arrangements may be made between the principal and parents of the child to hold a mobile phone for a child in the office for use after school hours.
- * We encourage hairstyles to be kept neat and conventional. For hygiene purposes hair must be tied back.
- * Pupils must respect the school building and property. If any deliberate damage is caused, the parent/guardian will be responsible for the cost of repair/replacement.

School Environment:

We pride ourselves on retaining and flying the School's Green Flag denoting an environmentally friendly policy.

- * Pupils are expected to value our school environment and to care for it. The school is a litter-free zone.
- * To protect the environment, the school is involved in various projects:

Composting:

Fruit peels, pencil parings, etc. are collected for the purpose of composting

Recycling: Waste paper and cardboard are collected for recycling.

All other empty cartons drink containers and wrapping papers are considered household waste and are taken home.

Behaviour in Class and in School Building:

- * Pupils must not behave in such a manner as to disrupt class work or to cause unnecessary disturbance.
- * It is school policy that every pupil listens to the class teacher, works hard; making best use of their time in school and does their best.

Behaviour in the Playground:

- * All pupils have a right to enjoy their time out in the playground in a safe environment at break periods.
- * Misdemeanour consists of any action that puts the safety of self or others at risk.
- * Fighting, rough play or any physical force is never allowed or tolerated.
- * In the interests of safety, climbing on the school railings/walls is strictly forbidden.
- * In the interest of safety when the bell rings during playtimes the children stop playing and walk to their class lines in an orderly fashion. Children do not enter the school building without getting permission from teachers.

Wet days:

- * Children do activities in class based on the class teacher's instructions or supervising teacher's instructions.
- * Children are expected to stay in their places on wet days except with permission from the teacher.

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Swimming days:

- * Every pupil listens to and obeys the class teacher.
- * Children walk in line behind the teacher to the swimming pool. No running allowed.
- * No shouting or playing in dressing rooms.
- * Every pupil listens to and obeys the instructor and life guard
- * No running around pool area
- * Swimming caps required. Arm bands needed for beginners and shower socks may be worn.
- * Children do not leave the pool without permission from the instructor or teacher
- * No jumping into the pool from the side - unless under the instructor's directions. No pushing or rough play in the pool
- * Children are expected to dress quickly after each session
- * Hairsprays/gels/spray deodorants are not allowed. Roll-on deodorants are allowed for 4th - 6th class pupils. Shampoo is allowed.
- * No drinks/sweets are bought from the machine.

Tour Rules:

- * Pupils enter/leave the bus in an orderly manner
- * Pupils are expected to arrive 15 minutes before departure time. Parents are expected to contact the school 15 minutes before departure time if child is sick or unable to attend.
- * School Rules apply to school tours
- * Mobile phones and electronic devices are banned on school tours. Teachers will have mobile phones on tour if parents/ children need to get in contact with one another.
- * On the bus pupils must sit in their seats and avoid loudness that would distract the driver
- * Pupils are encouraged to take drinks and sweets at the appointed lunch breaks.
- * Pupils stay in their appointed groups at all times.
- * Pupils wear track suits on school tours
- * Parental/Guardian permission slips allowing a) the child to go on tour and b) the teacher the right to authorise any medical or surgical procedure necessary are returned to the teacher prior to the tour.

Travelling to events outside of the school:

Children receiving lifts from other parents to or from matches or other school events must have permission from their parents to do so.

Children are expected to adhere to the school's code of behaviour at all times and sanctions will be put in place if rules are broken.

Sanctions

The use of sanctions is an important element in the school code. They are used in a corrective way and are intended to help the child to change and improve his or her behavioural patterns.

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* The nature of the misbehaviour and the age of the child will determine the strategy to be employed

Disciplinary Actions and Sanctions to deal with Bullying:

Bullying is a serious misdemeanour and the sanctions applied are the same as those listed below for serious misdemeanours.

- * Apology to the victim
- * A record is kept. Pupil/s write an account of the incident/s that lead to the Bullying behaviour and what they have learned from this episode in their lives - parents must sign this.
- * Pupils may be removed from activity if endangering self or others.
- * Pupil is sent to Principal/Deputy Principal and made aware that suspension could be a possibility
- * In cases where it has been determined that bullying behaviour has occurred the Principal/Deputy Principal informs parents.
- * Suspension procedures may follow if deemed necessary by the school authorities.

Disciplinary Actions and Sanctions to deal with Misdemeanours:

The degree of misdemeanours i.e. minor, serious or gross, will be judged by the teachers and/or Principal based on a common sense approach with regard to the gravity/frequency of such misdemeanours.

Examples of Minor Misdemeanours:

- * Interrupting class work/ arriving late for school/ running in school building/not listening and speaking out of turn/leaving seat without permission at break or lunch time/ placing unfinished food in bins/ leaving litter around school/ not wearing correct uniform/ being discourteous or unmannerly/ not completing homework without good reason/ bringing sweets and bars to school/ wearing jewellery (Jewellery is not allowed except for one small stud earring in the bottom of each ear and a watch)/ wearing make-up / belongings not named
- * unsuitable hairstyles, hair not tied back / not bringing explanation notes for absences and homework/ wearing unsuitable shoes/ cycling in school grounds.

Examples of steps to be taken by teachers when dealing with Minor Misdemeanours:

- * The class teacher will normally deal with classroom misdemeanours.
- * Verbal reprimand and reasoning with the pupil, including advice on how to improve, setting realistic targets.
- * Time out from friends and others (to reflect on the misbehaviour).
- * Loss of privileges such as 'Golden Time', Game time, extra recreation time etc.
- * Noting incidence of yard misbehaviour in yard book
- * Note in homework journal or other to parents.

Examples of steps to be taken when dealing with REGULAR occurrences of Minor Misdemeanours:

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- * A record is kept of regular instances of misdemeanour.

Following 5 instances the teacher will contact parents of child to discuss behaviour.

Communicating with parents sooner rather than later

- * Following this if the child continues with misdemeanours the pupil is sent to Principal/Deputy Principal.

- * Principal/Deputy Principal meets parent(s)/guardians concerning behaviour.

Examples of Serious Misdemeanours:

Constantly disruptive in class/ telling lies/stealing/damaging or interfering with another person's property/bullying/back answering a teacher/leaving school premises during school day without appropriate permission/ using or writing unacceptable language/ bringing chewing gum, glass bottles, correction fluids or other solvents to school/ deliberately injuring a fellow pupil or partaking in any activity which would put themselves or others in danger/ deliberately leaving taps on/ misuse of fire equipment/ bringing in mobile phones without permission

Examples of steps to be taken when dealing with Serious Misdemeanours:

- * A record is kept of all serious misdemeanours.
- * Pupils may be removed from activity if endangering self or others
- * Pupil is sent to Principal/Deputy Principal and made aware that suspension could be a possibility
- * Principal/Deputy Principal contacts parent/guardian
- * Suspension procedures may follow if deemed necessary by the school authorities.

Examples of Gross Misdemeanours:

Deliberately vandalizing school property/ aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour towards a teacher or pupil. Bringing alcohol, drugs, cigarettes or matches to school.

Examples of steps to be taken when dealing with Gross Misdemeanours:

- * A record is kept
- * Principal/Deputy Principal contacts parent/guardian
- * Suspension or expulsion may be considered

Immediate suspension will be considered if another child or person's safety is threatened.

Factors to consider before suspending a student:

The nature and seriousness of the behaviour

- What is the precise description of the behaviour?
- How persistent has the unacceptable behaviour been?
- Has the problem behaviour escalated, in spite of the interventions tried?

The context of the behaviour

- What are the circumstances of the incidents of serious misbehaviour (e.g. in class, in a particular teacher's class, in the yard, in a group?)

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- What factors may have triggered incidents of serious misbehaviour (e.g. bullying, cultural or family factors)?
- What is the age, stage of development and cognitive ability of the student?
- Are there any factors that may be associated with the behaviour (e.g. particular home circumstances, special educational needs)?

The impact of the behaviour

- How are other students and staff affected by the student's behaviour?
- What is the impact of the behaviour on the teaching and learning of the class?
- Does the behaviour have a particular or greater impact on some students or teachers?
- Does the student understand the impact of their behaviour on others?

The interventions tried to date

- What interventions have been tried? Over what period?
- How have the interventions been recorded and monitored?
- What has been the result of those interventions?
- Have the parents been involved in finding a solution to the problem behaviour?
- Has the intervention of NEPS or other psychological assessment or counselling been sought, where appropriate?
- Are any other interventions such as peer mediation, restorative justice approaches or family conferencing available?
- Is the student or parent involved with any support service and has this agency or support service been asked for help in solving this problem?
- Has any other agency been asked for assistance (e.g. Child Guidance Clinic, Child and Adolescent services)?

Whether suspension is a proportionate response

- Does the student's behaviour warrant suspension?
- Is the standard being applied to judging the behaviour the same as the standard applied to the behaviour of any other student?

The possible impact of suspension

- Will suspension allow additional or alternative interventions to be made?
- Will suspension help the student to change the inappropriate behaviour?
- How will suspension help teachers or other students affected by the behaviour?
- Will suspension exacerbate any educational vulnerability of the student?

Suspension as part of a behaviour management plan:

Suspension should be part of an agreed plan to address the student's behaviour. The suspension should:

- enable the school to set behavioural goals with the student and their parents
- give school staff an opportunity to plan other interventions
- impress on a student and their parents the seriousness of the behaviour

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Procedures in respect of suspension:

Schools are required by law to follow fair procedures when proposing to suspend a student. Where a preliminary assessment of the facts confirms serious misbehaviour that could warrant suspension, the school observe the following procedure:

- inform the student and their parents about the complaint
- give parents and student an opportunity to respond

Inform the student and parents:

Let the student and their parents know about the complaint, how it will be investigated, and that it could result in suspension.

Parents may be informed by phone or in writing, depending on the seriousness of the matter, informing parents in writing has the benefit of ensuring that there is a formal and permanent record of having let parents know. It also ensures that parents are clear about what their son or daughter is alleged to have done. It serves the important function of underlining to parents the seriousness with which the school views the alleged misbehaviour.

Give an opportunity to respond:

Parents and students should be given an opportunity to respond before a decision is made and before any sanction is imposed.

A meeting with the student and their parents provides an opportunity for them to give their side of the dispute about the facts. It may also be an opportunity for parents to make their case for lessening the sanction, and for the school to explore with parents how best to address the student's behaviour. If a student and their parents fail to attend a meeting, the Principal should write advising of the gravity of the matter, the importance of attending a re-scheduled meeting and failing that, the duty of the school authorities to make a decision to respond to the negative behaviour. The school should record the invitations made to parents and their response.

Procedures in relation to immediate suspension:

Where an immediate suspension is considered by the Principal to be warranted for reasons of the safety of the student, other students, staff or others, a preliminary investigation should be conducted to establish the case for the imposition of the suspension. The formal investigation should immediately follow the imposition of the suspension. All of the conditions for suspension apply to immediate suspension. No suspension, including an immediate suspension, should be open-ended.

In the case of an immediate suspension, parents must be notified and arrangements made with them for the student to be collected. The school must have regard to its duty of care for the student. In no circumstances should a student be sent home from school without first notifying parents.

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The period of suspension:

A student should not be suspended for more than three days, except in exceptional circumstances where the Principal considers that a period of suspension longer than three days is needed in order to achieve a particular objective. Each Board of Management should provide guidance to the Principal concerning the kinds of circumstances under which suspensions of longer than three days might be approved.

If a suspension longer than three days is being proposed by the Principal, the matter should be referred to the Board of Management for consideration and approval, giving the circumstances and expected outcomes.

However, a Board of Management may wish to authorise the Principal, with the approval of the Chairperson of the Board, to impose a suspension of up to five days in circumstances where a meeting of the Board cannot be convened in a timely fashion, subject to the guidance concerning such suspensions.

The Board of Management should normally place a ceiling of ten days on any one period of suspension imposed by it. The Board should formally review any proposal to suspend a student, where the suspension would bring the number of days for which the student has been suspended in the current school year to twenty days or more. Any such suspension is subject to appeal under section 29 of the Education Act 1998.

These provisions enable school authorities to give the student a reasonable time to reflect on their behaviour while avoiding undue loss of teaching time and loss of contact with the positive influences of school. They recognise the serious nature of the sanction of suspension and ensure that this seriousness is reflected in school procedures. The provisions mean that the Board of Management takes ultimate responsibility for sanctions of significant length, especially where such suspensions might reach twenty days in one school year and therefore might lead to an appeal.

Grounds for removing suspension:

A suspension may be removed if the Board of Management decides to remove the suspension for any reason or if the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Skills directs that it be removed following an appeal under section 29 of the Education Act 1998.

After the suspension ends:

A period of suspension will end on the date given in the letter of notification to the parents about the suspension.

Re-integrating the student:

The school should have a plan to help the student to take responsibility for catching up on work missed. This plan will help to avoid the possibility that suspension starts or amplifies a cycle of academic failure. Successful re-integration goes beyond academic work. A

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suspended student may feel angry or resentful about their suspension and these feelings can trigger problems with re-integration which, in turn, may lead to further problem behaviour. Where possible, the school should arrange for a member of staff to provide support to the student during the re-integration process.

Clean slate:

When any sanction, including suspension, is completed, a student should be given the opportunity and support for a fresh start. Although a record is kept of the behaviour and any sanction imposed, once the sanction has been completed the school should expect the same behaviour of this student as of all other students.

Records and reports:

Records of investigation and decision making.

Formal written records should be kept of:

- the investigation (including notes of all interviews held)
- the decision making process
- the decision and the rationale for the decision
- the duration of the suspension and any conditions attached to the suspension

Report to the Board of Management:

The Principal should report all suspensions to the Board of Management, with the reasons for and the duration of each suspension.

Report to TUSLA:

The Principal is required to report suspensions in accordance with the TUSLA reporting guidelines (Education (Welfare) Act 2000, section 21 (4)(a)).

Review of use of suspension:

The Board of Management should review the use of suspension in the school at regular intervals to ensure that its use is consistent with school policies, that patterns of use are examined to identify factors that may be influencing behaviour in the school and to ensure that use of suspension is appropriate and effective.

Procedure for Expulsion:

* The above procedures for suspension are followed in the case of expelling a pupil from the school.

* Prior to the expulsion of a pupil the Education Welfare Officer must be notified in writing of the school's intention twenty days in advance.

Success Criteria: (by which the policy will be judged)

- * Atmosphere of discipline within the school
- * Children are aware of school rules
- * Staff apply school rules
- * Growth in self discipline

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- * Co-operation between parents, teachers and pupils in maintaining the code.
- * Comments or compliments on behaviour.
- * Children working to the best of their ability
- * Class working to the best of their ability
- * Improvements in behaviour

Monitoring and Review:

Each staff member is responsible for the implementation of the Code of Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policy. Within the classroom the teacher monitors his/her class. Teachers consider themselves responsible for the behaviour of children within sight or sound of them and respond to any instance of unacceptable behaviour. The principal is responsible for monitoring and reviewing Policy at staff level on a regular basis and reports any review the staff deem necessary to the Board of Management.

The Board of Management (BOM) has ultimate responsibility for discipline in the school under its management and a duty to ensure that a fair code of discipline applies therein. The BOM will ensure the Code of Behaviour and Anti-Bullying policy is reviewed yearly or more often if the need arises.

In registering children in Robertstown National School parents are expected to support teachers in following the policies and procedures of the school. A copy of all policies and procedures is available for view by all parents. Parents are informed at the start of every school year that they may receive a copy of all policies and procedures if they so wish.

Child Protection Policy

The Board of Management ('the Board') of Robertstown National School strive to provide a well-ordered, caring, happy and secure atmosphere where the academic, personal and social development of all our pupils flourishes in a culture of respect, tolerance and openness. Accordingly, the Board recognise that child protection and welfare considerations permeate all aspects of school life and must be reflected in all of the school's policies and practices. The Board fully accept that child protection is and must be a priority for the school and be at the core of all of our educational and non-educational activities. Mindful of the school's obligation and duty to provide pupils with the highest possible standard of care in order to promote their well-being and protect them from harm, the Board has adopted and commits to implement fully, and without modification, the Department of Education and Skills' 'Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools' - 2011 ('Child Protection Procedures 2011'), as part of the school's overall child protection policy.

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Rationale

Following a collaborative process between the staff, the Board and parents' representatives of the school, this child protection policy is set out in order to:

1. reaffirm the Board's commitment to the safety, protection and welfare of every child in our school;
2. formally recognise that the protection and welfare of children in our school is of overriding importance to all other considerations;
3. give clear direction and guidance in implementing Children First - National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children - 2011 ('Children First') in a consistent and uniform manner within the school when dealing with allegations/suspensions of child abuse; and
4. update the school's existing child protection policy in line with the 'Child Protection Procedures 2011', and 'Children First'.

Aims and Objectives

The Board's commitment to the protection and welfare of our pupils is reflected in this policy. Through this policy the Board will:

1. give effect to the improved oversight arrangements contained in the Child Protection Procedures 2011;
2. ensure that school staff and volunteers are aware of how to recognise signs of child abuse or neglect;
3. develop guidance and procedures for school staff and volunteers who may have reasonable grounds for concern about the safety and welfare of children at the school;
4. identify and adopt safe practices to minimise the possibility of harm or accidents to children and protect school staff and volunteers from the necessity to take unnecessary risks that may leave them open to accusations of abuse or neglect;
5. ensure best practice in the recruitment of staff and volunteers;
6. fully co-operate with the relevant statutory authorities in relation to child protection and welfare matters;
7. develop a practice of openness with parents/guardians and encourage parental involvement in the education of their children;
8. ensure that confidentiality requirements in dealing with child protection matters are fully complied with; and
9. ensure that curricular provisions are utilised fully and effectively in order to provide a personal safety skills education which specifically addresses abuse prevention for all children in the school.

Principles Underpinning the Policy

The principles that underpin and inform this policy, and provide the contextual basis for best practice in the protection and welfare of our pupils are:

1. the welfare of children is of paramount importance;
2. children have a right to be heard, listened to and taken seriously;
3. parents/guardians have a right to respect and should be consulted and involved in matters that concern their family;

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4. the prevention of child abuse requires a coordinated multidisciplinary approach, effective management, clarity of responsibility and training of school staff and volunteers; and
5. early intervention and support should be available to promote the welfare of children and families, particularly where they are vulnerable or at risk of not receiving adequate care or protection.

ORGANISATIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES

The purpose of the Child Protection Procedures 2011 is to give direction and guidance to school authorities, school staff and volunteers in the implementation of Children First when dealing with allegations/suspicions of child abuse. In addition, the Child Protection Procedures 2011 also aim to provide sufficient information to school authorities, school staff and volunteers to enable them to be alert to, and to be aware of, what to do in situations where there is a concern, suspicion or allegation of child abuse.

This policy addresses the responsibilities of the Board in the following areas:

1. Personnel - the roles the Designated Liaison Person ('DLP'), the Deputy Designated Liaison Person ('Deputy DLP'), the Principal (other than as the DLP), school staff, the Chairperson (as DLP pro tempore), the Board, and volunteers have, and the responsibilities that are attached to these roles in relation to child protection.
2. Prevention - measures that can contribute to the prevention of child abuse through curricular provision.
3. Procedures - how to identify child abuse and the procedures for dealing with allegations/suspicions.
4. Practice - what measures are in place or can be instituted to provide best practice in the protection and welfare of our pupils and staff.

1. PERSONNEL

For the purposes of this policy, school staff shall mean; teachers, Special Needs Assistants ('SNA'), secretarial staff and maintenance staff. Volunteers shall mean; parental volunteers, community volunteers, people seeking work experience, representatives of sporting or other organisations, and students on teaching practice.

1.1. Designated Liaison Person (DLP)

The Designated Liaison Person is the Principal **Marion Sherlock**.

The DLP has the specific responsibilities (as contained in section 3.2.2 of the Child Protection Procedures 2011) for:

1. ensuring that the standard reporting procedure for suspected cases of child abuse (as contained in section 4.2 of the Child Protection Procedures 2011) are referred promptly to the designated person in the HSE Children and Family Services or in the event of an emergency and the unavailability of the HSE, to An Garda Síochána;

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2. requesting advice and consultation from the HSE Children and Family Services (in accordance in section 4.2 of the Child Protection Procedures 2011) in relation to the making of reports of suspected cases of child abuse. In doing so, the DLP explicitly states that the request is for advice and consultation and not a formal report;
3. representing the school in all dealings with the HSE, An Garda Síochána and other parties in connection with allegations/suspensions of child abuse. All matters pertaining to the processing or investigation of child abuse will be processed through the DLP; and
4. acting as a resource person to any of the school staff or volunteers who have child protection concerns.

1.2. The Deputy Designated Liaison Person (Deputy DLP)

The Deputy Designated Liaison Person is the Deputy Principal **Aoife Coughlan**

The Deputy DLP will assume the responsibilities of the DLP, where the DLP is unavailable for whatever reason. In order for the Deputy DLP to effectively assume these responsibilities in the absence of the DLP, the Deputy DLP will have access to all relevant records pertaining to child protection matters as required.

1.3. Principal

At meetings of the Board, the Principal (other than as the DLP) has responsibility (in accordance with section 3.3 of the Child Protection Procedures 2011) for reporting the number of reports made to the HSE by the DLP, the number of cases where the DLP sought advice from the HSE and as a result of this advice, no report was made, and where there were no such reports made or advice sought.

1.4. School Staff

School staff are especially well placed to observe changes in children's behaviour, their lack of development or outward signs of abuse. Where a member of the school staff has suspicions or receives a disclosure involving possible child abuse, such suspicions or disclosure will be recorded by the member of school staff and immediately reported to the DLP (or Deputy DLP where necessary).

1.5. Chairperson of the Board

The Chairperson works closely with the DLP when a suspicion or allegation of child abuse is reported to the DLP and/or HSE. The Chairperson also has responsibility, where an allegation or concern of abuse relates to the DLP, to assume the role normally undertaken by the DLP. The Chairperson will follow the standard reporting procedure for suspected cases of child abuse (as contained in section 4.2 of the Child Protection Procedures 2011), in addition to the procedures where an allegation of abuse or neglect is made against a school employee (as contained in section 5 of the Child Protection Procedures 2011).

1.6. Board of Management

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The Board has the primary duty of care for the protection, safety and welfare of all pupils of the school. In relation to this overriding duty, the Board has specific responsibilities for:

1. production of procedures, which all school staff and volunteers must follow where they suspect, or are alerted to, possible child abuse, including where a child discloses abuse;
2. designation of a DLP and a Deputy DLP;
3. monitoring of the progress of children considered to be at risk;
4. contributing to the prevention of child abuse through curricular provision;
5. provision of access or in-service training for school staff and volunteers to ensure a good working knowledge of child protection issues and procedures.

The Board also has a duty of care to the employees of the school. As an employer the Board has specific responsibilities for the action to be taken where allegations are received against employees;

1.7. Volunteers

Where a volunteer has suspicions or receives a disclosure involving possible child abuse, such suspicions or disclosure will be recorded by the volunteer and immediately reported to the DLP (or Deputy DLP where necessary).

2. PREVENTION

The Stay Safe programme is a vital resource used by the school to help children develop the skills necessary to enable them to recognise and resist abuse and potentially abusive situations. The programme is taught under the strand unit 'Safety and Protection' as part of the schools' Social Personal and Health Education ('SPHE') curricular programme. In addition to this, the school, as part of the SPHE curriculum, provides Relationship and Sexuality Education ('RSE'). RSE provides children with structured opportunities to develop the knowledge, attitudes, values, beliefs and practical skills necessary to establish and sustain healthy personal relationships as children and, subsequently, as adults.

All children are taught the Stay Safe programme and RSE in an age appropriate way, with teaching materials used to ensure the full understanding of the programme's content.

Children with special education needs follow the Stay Safe Programme and RSE in a manner that is appropriate to their needs. Prior to the commencement of the programme in the classroom, parents/guardians are invited to share and discuss issues and opinions relevant to their child's needs, and where a child has poor communicative skills the Special Needs Teacher and/or SNA will encourage and help the pupil verbalise their opinions.

Upon enrolment of their child(ren), the school requests that parents/guardians give consent to their child(ren) taking part in RSE and the Stay Safe Programme as part of the SPHE curriculum. However, in accordance with section 30(2)(e) of the Education Act 1998, the school shall not require any student to attend instruction in any subject which is

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contrary to the conscience of the parents/guardians. Should parents/guardians wish to withdraw their child(ren) from the sensitive aspects of the SPHE curriculum, then the school will endeavour to facilitate such withdraw by making reasonable alternative organisational arrangements which respect the beliefs and sensibilities of the parents/guardian and child(ren).

In the event that a teacher opts out of teaching the sensitive aspects of the SPHE curriculum, another teacher suitably qualified from the school staff will take over the administering of the programme in that classroom.

3. PROCEDURES

All school staff, members of the Board and volunteers will follow the Child Protection Procedures 2011 for the reporting of suspicions or disclosures that a child may have been abused, or is being abused, or is at risk of abuse.

3.1. Definition of Abuse

Child abuse may take many forms but it can be categorised into four different types: neglect, physical abuse, emotional abuse and sexual abuse (as contained in sections 2.1 to 2.1.7 of the Child Protection Procedures 2011). A child may be subjected to one or more forms of abuse at any given time.

3.2. Recognition and Recording of Abuse

There are a number of indicators of child abuse (as contained in Appendix 3 of the Child Protection Procedures 2011). It is important to stress that, no one indicator should be seen as conclusive in itself of abuse. All signs and symptoms must be examined in the total context of the child's situation and family circumstances.

In situations where a member of school staff or volunteer suspects that a child may have been abused, or is being abused, or is at risk of abuse, they will ensure that such suspicions are recorded (in accordance with section 3.6 of the Child Protection Policy 2011).

School staff or volunteers will make a full written record of:

1. what they have observed;
2. when they observed it;
3. any signs of physical injury, a detailed description of such injury and, if appropriate, a sketch of such injury;
4. any comment by the child concerned, or by any other person, about how an injury occurred, preferably quoting words actually used, as soon as possible after the comment has been made.

The written record will be signed, dated and given to the DLP without delay (in accordance with section 4.1 of the Child Protection Procedures 2011), who will retain it in a secure location and discuss the contents of the record with the reporting member of school

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staff or volunteer in order to decide the appropriate course of action to be taken (in accordance with sections 4.1 to 4.2.8 of the Child Protection Procedures 2011).

3.3. Disclosure and Recording of Abuse

In situations where a member of school staff or volunteer receives a disclosure from a child or third party that abuse has taken place, or is taking place, or there is a risk of abuse occurring, school staff and volunteers have a supportive, not an investigative role.

3.3.1. Disclosure from a Child

An abused child is likely to be under severe emotional stress and a member of staff or volunteer may be the only adult whom the child is prepared to trust. When information is offered in confidence, the member of school staff or volunteer will act tactfully and sensitivity in responding to the disclosure. Accordingly, they will listen to, and facilitate the child to talk about the situation, rather than interviewing the child about details of what has happened. School staff or volunteers will:

1. listen to the child and take all disclosures seriously;
2. make a full and accurate written record of the discussion (in accordance with section 3.6 of the Child Protection Policy 2011);
3. not ask leading questions or make suggestions to the child;
4. not stop the child recalling significant events;
5. remain calm and offer reassurance that everything possible will be done to protect and support them but not make promises;
6. explain the need for action and the possible consequences, which will necessarily involve other adults being informed.

The written record will be signed, dated and given to the DLP without delay (in accordance with section 4.1 of the Child Protection Procedures 2011), who will retain it in a secure location and discuss the contents of the record with the reporting school staff member or volunteer in order to decide the appropriate course of action to be taken (in accordance with sections 4.1 to 4.2.8 of the Child Protection Procedures 2011).

3.3.2. Disclosures from a Third Party

In situations where a member of school staff or volunteer receives a disclosure from a third party that a child may have been abused, or is being abused, or is at risk of abuse, then the member of school staff or volunteer will request that the third party immediately makes a report to the DLP. If the third party does not make such a report to the DLP, then the staff member or volunteer to whom the third party initially disclosed the information to will make a report to the DLP detailing the disclosure made (in accordance with section 4.1 of the Child Protection Procedures 2011).

3.4. DLP & Reporting Procedures

Where, after discussion with the reporting member of school staff or volunteer, the DLP is satisfied that there are reasonable grounds for the suspicion or disclosure of child abuse (in accordance with section 4.2.2 of the Child Protection Procedures 2011), or

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where the DLP has requested advice and consultation from the HSE Children and Family Services and been advised that a report should be made (in accordance with section 4.2.1 of the Child Protection Procedures 2011), then the reporting procedures contained in section 4.2 of the Child Protection Procedures 2011 will be adhered to.

The DLP will also inform the parents/guardians of the child that a report has been made to the HSE (or An Garda Síochána) and will record the information communicated to the parents/guardians. However, the DLP will not inform the parents/guardians in circumstances where the decision to inform is likely to endanger the child or place the child at further risk. The decision not to inform the parents/guardians will be recorded by the DLP, in addition to the reasons for such a decision (in accordance with section 1.9.3 of the Child Protection Procedures 2011).

3.5. Allegations or Suspicions Involving School Employees

The most important consideration for the Board and the DLP is the safety and protection of the children at the school. Notwithstanding this, the Board (as employer) also has a duty to protect school staff against claims which may be false or malicious.

Where an allegation or suspicion of child abuse is made against a member of school staff, there are two procedures to be followed:

1. the reporting procedure as contained in sections 4.2 and 5.3 of the Child Protection Procedures 2011 which is the responsibility of the DLP (if the allegation or suspicions is made against the DLP, the Chairperson will act as DLP pro tempore and will assume the responsibility for reporting the matter); and
2. the procedure for dealing with the employee as contained in section 5.4 of the Child Protection Procedures 2011 which is the responsibility of the Board.

The DLP will inform the Chairperson of an allegation or suspicion of child abuse against an employee. The Chairperson and DLP will make the employee aware privately that:

1. an allegation has been made against them;
2. the nature of the allegation; and
3. whether or not the matter has been reported at that point.

The employee will be given a copy of the written allegation and any other relevant documentation. The employee will be requested to respond to the allegation in writing to the Board within five days.

The priority in all cases is that no child be exposed to unnecessary risk. Therefore, the Chairperson may seek advice and consultation from the HSE and/or An Garda Síochána as to the appropriate protective action to take. These measures will be proportionate to the level of risk and will not unreasonably penalise the employee in any way unless to protect the child.

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If the nature of the allegation warrants immediate action in the Chairperson's opinion, the Board will be convened to consider the matter. This may result in the Board directing that the employee absent themselves from the school forthwith while the matter is being investigated. Where the Board is unsure as to whether this should occur, advice will be sought from An Garda Síochána, the HSE and/or external legal advisers. Should the Board direct that the employee absent themselves, such an absence of the employee will be regarded as an administrative leave of absence with pay and not suspension and will not imply any degree of guilt. The DES will also be informed.

3.6. Allegations or Suspicions Involving a Member of the Board

Where an allegation or suspicion of child abuse is made against a member of the Board, the DLP will adhere to the reporting procedure in accordance with section 4.2 of the Child Protection Procedures 2011, and will also inform the Chairperson of an allegation or suspicion of abuse against a member of the Board. The Chairperson will inform the Patron that a report involving a member of the Board has been submitted to the HSE and shall take direction from the Patron as to the continued involvement of that member of the Board. Where the allegation or suspicion of child abuse is against the Chairperson, the DLP will adhere to the reporting procedure in accordance with section 4.2 of the Child Protection Procedures 2011, and the Principal or Secretary of the Board will inform the Patron that a report involving the Chairperson has been submitted to the HSE.

3.7. Peer Abuse

In some cases of child abuse the alleged perpetrator may be a child. In a situation where child abuse is alleged or disclosed to have been carried out by another child, the reporting procedures contained in section 4.1 and 4.2 of the Child Protection Policy 2011 will be followed.

3.8. Confidentiality

In the course of discharging their responsibilities under section 4.2 of the Child Protection Procedures, the DLP will also act in accordance with section 1.9 of the Child Protection Procedures 2011 in relation to the sharing of information. All information regarding allegations/suspicions of child abuse will only be shared on a need to know basis, in the interests of the child with persons who have a legitimate involvement or role in dealing with the allegation or suspicion. Giving information to those who need to have that information for the protection of a child who may have been or has been abused, is not a breach of confidentiality.

3.9. Protection for Persons Reporting Child Abuse

The Protection for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act (1998) provides immunity from civil liability to any person who reports child abuse 'reasonably and in good faith' to designated officers of HSE or any member of An Garda Síochána. Where a reported suspicion of child abuse proves unfounded, a person who takes an action would have to prove that the reporter had not acted reasonably and in good faith making the report. The act provides significant protection for employees who report child abuse.

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4. PRACTICE

In order to provide best practice in the protection and welfare of our pupils and staff, the Board has identified the following areas of school practice that can contribute to ensuring that children and staff are protected.

4.1. Recruitment and Selection of Staff

The recruitment of school staff and volunteers is crucial to ensuring that those working with children in the school are safe adults insofar as this can be determined. The Board requires all applicants to supply appropriate personal details, past and current work experience, indicating relevant qualifications or skills acquired and a minimum of two written references, the veracity of which are checked through verbal contact with the referees. All persons being appointed to teaching, non-teaching or volunteer positions who will have unsupervised access to the children at the school are required to be vetted by the Garda Vetting Unit prior to commencing the position in accordance with the Department of Education and Skills' Circular 0063/2010. In addition to this, all persons being appointed to teaching and non-teaching roles are required to provide the Statutory Declaration and Form of Undertaking contained in Circular 0063/2010.

4.2. Supervision of Children

The school Supervision Policy and routines are followed by all staff to ensure that there is comprehensive supervision of children at all times. School staff ensure that children are always visible in the school yard and children are not permitted to spend time in classrooms or toilets where they would not be under adult supervision. Certain areas of the school premises outside of the school yard are also monitored by CCTV in order to provide an additional resource for the supervision of the children's safety and welfare. Children are not permitted to leave the school yard or to engage with adults who are outside of the school yard.

Children are to be encouraged at all times to play co-operatively and inappropriate behaviour will be addressed under the Code of Behaviour and, where necessary, the Anti-Bullying policy. If an incident occurs which is considered to be of a sexualised nature, the supervising member of staff will notify the DLP who will record it and respond to it appropriately in accordance with section 6.2 of the Child Protection Procedures 2011.

4.3. First Aid/Accidents

Accidents occur in spite of supervision and the school's First Aid policy provides clear guidelines for all school staff on how first aid should be administered where a child has a minor accident.

In accordance with the school's Accident Policy, in the event of a more serious accident or a child becoming very ill and requiring the assistance of trained medical professionals, every possible effort is made to contact the pupil's parents/guardians or the persons delegated to take responsibility for that child. Where such contact cannot be made the

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child is taken immediately to a doctor or hospital by a member of staff. School staff will not carry children alone in their cars at anytime, and in such circumstances will be accompanied by a second member of the school staff or volunteer.

In all cases involving minor or more serious accidents, parents/guardians, upon enrolment of their child(ren) in the school are requested to give their written consent to the administering of first aid and the transportation of their child(ren) to trained medical professionals if necessary.

4.4. Toileting/Intimate Care

A child who has specific toileting and/or intimate care needs will normally have an SNA assigned to them. Prior to the child's enrolment in the school, a meeting between the child's parents/guardians and all school staff involved with the child is held to address and agree the practices that are acceptable as to how the school will meet the needs of the child. Toileting and/or intimate care will be normally be given by the child's SNA in the presence of, and where necessary, the assistance of another member of staff.

Toileting accidents are not uncommon, particularly with junior infants. Upon enrolment of their child(ren) in the school, parents/guardians are requested to give their written consent to the changing of the child's uniform where there has been a toileting accident or other soiling as a result of illness. The uniform will be changed by a member of school staff in the presence of another staff member.

4.5. Swimming

The school offers swimming as an additional activity. In deciding the classes that will participate in the activity, the school takes into account the age of the pupils and the level of assistance in changing/dressing that is required relative to the pupils' ages. This is in order to minimise the level of assistance that members of staff or volunteers are required to give to pupils in this regard. All members of staff and volunteers assisting with supervision in changing areas will act prudently and will not enter changing cubicles, except where a child has an accident requiring assistance from a member of staff.

4.6. One-to-One Teaching

The school actively promotes in-class support for pupils with special educational needs and those requiring additional learning support in order to minimise one-to-one teaching and promote inclusion in accordance with the school's Equal Opportunity & Gender Equality policy.

4.7. Attendance

Parents/guardians, upon enrolment of their child(ren) in the school are made aware of the school's obligations under the Education Welfare Act 2000. In accordance with the school's Attendance policy, the school utilises administration software that enables each member of staff to record and monitor a child's attendance. The administration software also allows members of staff to monitor trends in a child's non-attendance.

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4.8. Resource Content

All resource material is checked, insofar as practicable, by school staff for its appropriateness with regard to age and suitability.

4.9. Visitors

All visitors are supervised in the discharge of their business. As an additional measure, to minimise the risk of unsupervised access to the school premises, all entrance and exit points are locked after pupils enter the school, with access to the school premises only available via the main entrance which is monitored by CCTV.

4.10. Internet

As part of the school's overall education programme, it offers pupils supervised access to the internet (in accordance with the Acceptable Usage Policy/Internet Policy). The school promotes the safe and responsible use of the internet by protecting pupils from what is inappropriate and/or harmful and guiding them to what is safe, appropriate, fun, and educational. The school also provides information to parents/guardians to assist them in making their children's internet usage safer at home.

4.11. Custody and Separation

Parents experiencing separation are encouraged to come and speak confidentially to the teachers and/or principal. Such matters will be treated with sensitivity and compassion, and ultimately the primary concern of the school is for the well-being and overall development of the child. When the child spends time in two homes, the Board requires that both sets of emergency contact numbers are given by the parents to the school. The Board also requires any changes in collection arrangements to be communicated by the parents to the school. In the absence of a custody arrangement, both parents will be treated as equal partners in terms of parenting rights and responsibilities. School staff will not withhold a child from either parent, unless a custody arrangement or court order requires such withholding.

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Appendix 1	Fire Evacuation Procedure
Appendix 2	Handling a disclosure
Appendix 3	Definition and Recognition of Child Abuse (Children First - Summary, Chapter 2)
Appendix 4	Some suggestions for monitoring
Appendix 5	Sample Record

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Fire Procedure

- *When the fire alarm is heard the person in charge will give the warning "FIRE".*
- The teacher will instruct the students to stand and remain silent and line up in table order.
- The teacher will pick up the Class List and Red Key and quickly proceed to classroom door.
- The teacher will determine the safest exit and instruct their class to proceed to Assembly Point reminding them to remain silent and stay in their line.
- The teacher will direct and instruct their class to walk calmly to their assembly point, the teacher will be the last person to exit the room, ensuring they have checked toilets and closed all windows and doors.
- S.N.A.'s to ensure their child is with teacher.
- Students outside the classroom and inside the building should join the nearest group and report to their class teacher when reaching assembly point.
- Once assembled at point the teacher will check the class register and report any missing students to the person in charge.
- On no account should anyone re-enter the school.

Special Duties – 2016/2017

All staff to have keys (red cover) to yard gates!

1) Principal

- a) Collect Fire File from office
- b) Open front gate and turn key to the permanent position (Main Front Gate.)
- c) Press green button at front door (inside), if not already done

2) Secretary

- a) Ring the Fire Brigade
- b) Press green button at front door (inside), if not already done
- c) Put key in panel
- d) Open side gate near main entrance
- e) Prepare for fire engine
- f) Visitors must sign in/out of school, Mona and Mary must be made aware of all visitors to the school, so that visitors can be directed to safety points,

3) All Teachers

- a) You will be the last person to leave your classroom, (it would be advisable to have a few practise runs prior to fire drill to familiarise the children with this).
- b) Bring out the Class List (at door) and Red Key / check classroom toilets / close classroom doors & windows and proceed to designated point.
- c) Please instruct children to remain absolutely silent walking out and when in line, very difficult to roll call when children are making noise!
- d) When outside call the roll, and await instructions on where to exit.

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4) **Sheila Lynch**

- a) Open gate at Tower

5) **Claire Poole**

- a) Staff toilets and storage area
- b) Staff room

6) **Sheila Killeen**

- a) Check toilets outside hall
- b) Check Hall

7) **Aoife Coughlan & Kirstin Conroy**

- a) Aoife to help with Clare's Junior Infants (inside & outside) and check infant toilets.
- b) Kirstin to help with Jenny's Junior Infants, (inside & outside) and check toilets in classrooms.
- c) If children are with S.E.N. at time of drill, S.E.N. team will ensure children are brought to their class line outside. In this case, infant teachers must ensure to check class toilet area. Travelling resource teachers bring children in their charge out to their class line.

Assembly Points A & B

Assembly Point A – Junior Yard (Black Yard by fence)

Point 1.	Mr. Donovan
Point 2.	Mr. O'Donoghue
Point 3.	Mr. Brennan
Point 4.	Ms. Murphy

Assembly Point B – Senior Yard (Astro Turf)

Point 8.	Ms. Magrane
Point 7.	Ms. Ennis
Point 6.	Ms. De Araugo
Point 5.	Mr. Fitzgerald
Point 4.	Mrs. Kelly

**ABSOLUTE SILENCE DURING
FIRE DRILL AT ALL TIMES**

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Handling a Disclosure

- Listen
- Do not ask leading questions
- Offer reassurance - no promises
- Allow child to talk - time
- Do not over react
- Explain regarding further action
- Record, record, record

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Definition and Recognition of Child Abuse

Introduction

Child abuse can be categorized into four different types: neglect, emotional abuse, physical abuse and sexual abuse. A child may be subjected to more than one form of abuse at any given time. The National Guidelines have adopted the following definitions of children abuse:

Neglect:

Neglect is normally defined in terms of an omission, where a child suffers significant harm or impairment of development by being deprived of food, clothing, warmth, hygiene, intellectual stimulation, supervision and safety, attachment to and affection from adults, or medical care.

Harm can be defined as the ill treatment or the impairment of the health or development of a child. Whether it is significant is determined by his/her health and development as compared to that which could reasonably be expected of a similar child.

Neglect generally becomes apparent in different ways over a period of time rather than at one specific point. For instance, a child who suffers a series of minor injuries is not having his or her needs met for supervision and safety. A child whose ongoing failure to gain weight or whose height is significantly below average may be being deprived of adequate nutrition. A child who consistently misses school may be being deprived of intellectual stimulation. The threshold of significant harm is reached when the child's needs are neglected to the extent that his or her well being and/or development are severely affected.

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is normally to be found in the relationship between a caregiver and a child rather than in a specific event or pattern of events. It occurs when a child's needs for affection, approval, consistency and security are not met. It is rarely manifested in terms of physical symptoms. Examples of emotional abuse include:

1. persistent criticism, sarcasm, hostility or blaming
2. conditional parenting, in which the level of care shown to a child is made contingent on his or her behaviours or actions
3. emotional unavailability by the child's parent/carer
4. unresponsiveness, inconsistent or inappropriate expectations of a child
5. premature imposition of responsibility on a child
6. unrealistic or inappropriate expectations of a child's capacity to understand something or to behave and control himself in a certain way
7. under or over protection of a child
8. failure to show interest in, or provide age appropriate opportunities for, a child's cognitive and emotional development
9. use of unreasonable or over harsh disciplinary measures

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10. exposure to domestic violence

Children show signs of emotional abuse by their behaviour (for example, excessive clinginess to or avoidance of the parent/carer), their emotional state (low self-esteem, unhappiness), or their development (non-organic failure to thrive). The threshold of significant harm is reached when abusive interactions become typical of the relationship between the child and parent/carer.

Physical Abuse

Physical abuse is any form of non-accidental injury that causes significant harm to a child, including:

1. shaking
2. use of excessive force in handling
3. deliberate poisoning
4. suffocation
5. Munchausen's syndrome by proxy (where parents fabricate stories of illness about their child or cause physical signs of illness)
6. allowing or creating a substantial risk of significant harm to a child

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse occurs when a child is used by another person for his or her gratification or sexual arousal, or for that of other. For example:

1. exposure of the sexual organs or any sexual act intentionally performed in the presence of a child
2. intentional touching or molesting of the body of a child whether by a person or object for the purpose of sexual arousal or gratification
3. masturbation in the presence of a child or involvement of the child in the act of masturbation
4. sexual intercourse with the child, whether oral, vaginal or anal
5. sexual exploitation of a child
6. consensual sexual activity between an adult and a child under 17 years. In relation to child sexual abuse, it should be noted that, for the purpose of the criminal law, the age of consent to sexual intercourse is 17 years. This means for example, that sexual intercourse between a 16 year old girl and a 17 year old boy is illegal, although it might not be regarded as constituting child sexual abuse.

Recognising Child Abuse

The ability to recognize child abuse depends as much on a person's willingness to accept the possibility of its existence as it does on knowledge and information. It is important to note that child abuse is not always readily visible, and may not be as clearly observable as the 'text book' scenarios outlined in these guidelines suggest. The recognition of abuse normally runs along three stages:

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1. *Considering the possibility* - if a child appears to have suffered an inexplicable and suspicious looking injury, seems distressed with obvious reason, displays unusual behavioural problems or appears fearful in the company of parents/carers.
2. *Observing signs of abuse* - a cluster or pattern of signs is the most reliable indicator of abuse. Children may make direct or reliable indicator of abuse. children may make direct or indirect disclosures, which should always be taken seriously. Less obvious disclosures may be gently explored with a child, without direct questioning (which may be more usefully carried out by the health board or An Garda Síochána). Play situations such as drawing or story telling may reveal significant information. Indications of harm must always be considered in relation to the child's social and family context, and it is important to always be open to alternative explanations.
3. *Recording of information* - it is important to establish the grounds for concern by obtaining as much detailed information as possible. Observations should be recorded and should include dates, times, names, locations, context and any other information which could be considered relevant or which might facilitate further assessment/investigation.

Some Suggestions For Monitoring

Teachers are the only professionals who are in regular day to day contact with school-aged children and because of that, we have a key role in situations where there are suspicions that a child is being abused. When there are such concerns, it is essential to keep an objective and factual record of all the information available (DES Guidelines, page 10, paragraph 2.5.1). We may also be requested, following a child protection conference, to keep a child under observation in a manner that is not inconsistent with our existing duties (DES Guidelines, page 13, paragraph 3.4.6). This hand-out has been created to assist teachers in this regard.

Useful Hint: Enter your observation under the various heading as appropriate. This will help to categorise your observations and enable you to note an emerging pattern or a deteriorating situation.

Robertstown National School

Name of School:

Code: *Keep in secure place*

Strictly confidential

Attendance and Punctuality: *Remember to sign and date each entry*

Date and times are important, since patterns or absence of lateness can be very revealing. If late, note if brought to school by parent/carer/older sibling and record any explanation offered.

Appearance, Hygiene, Care: *Record observations in chronological order*

Record observations of the child's appearance, for example, poor hygiene inappropriate clothing, no lunch

Physical Injury: *Include sketch of injury, if appropriate*

Give detailed description including, in the child's or carer's own words, if any explanation is offered

Child's Behaviour: *Describe what you have observed factually*

A child may become increasingly aggressive, tense, unresponsive or show other signs of distress. Any sexualized behavior should be noted.

Child's Language: *Record child's exact words, not the adult equivalent*

The child may not have the language/be afraid to verbalise clearly what is happening. They may however drop hints or refer to what is happening obliquely.

Child's Drawings/Writing/Play: *Remember context can be very important*

A young child may show few signs of abuse when he/she experiences a sense of security in a busy, structured classroom setting therefore careful observation of the child in less formal or unstructured settings are important. Always include the context in your record eg "when returning from the PE Room", "during small break", "when lining up for home time".

Mood Changes: *Remember monitoring should be systematic, continuous and requires perseverance*

Child may, for example, become quiet and tense towards end of day or if collected by a certain adult. This might also happen on certain days or before or after certain activities. Again, remember to include the context in your recordings.

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Sample Record

School ID:

Date:

Observation:

Signed:

Robertstown National School

Substitute Staff Information

Name _____
Address _____

Date of Birth _____
P.P.S. No. _____

Contact No.
Mobile _____
Home _____
Email _____

Robertstown National School

DATE	STUDENT NAME	DESCRIPTION OF BEHAVIOUR	CONSEQUENCE (IF A PHONE CALL, INCLUDE NUMBER)	ADDITIONAL NOTES