An Roinn Oideachais

Department of Education

Child Protection and Safeguarding Initial Inspection

INITIAL REPORT

Ainm na scoile / School name	Ballyhea N S
Seoladh na scoile / School address	Ballyhea Rathluirc Co. Cork
Uimhir rolla / Roll number	17112F

Date of inspection: 07-05-2021

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WHAT IS A CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING INSPECTION?

A Child Protection and Safeguarding Inspection (CPSI) is a focused inspection of the implementation of the *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary schools 2017*. These procedures provide direction and guidance to school authorities and to school personnel in relation to meeting their statutory obligations under the Children First Act 2015. They also provide direction and guidance in relation to the continued implementation of the best practice, non-statutory guidance set out in Children First National Guidance 2017. The CPSI inspection model examines the implementation of the *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary schools 2017* in schools through conducting ten checks based on the procedures.

The CPSI inspection process consists of two inspections: an **Initial Child Protection and Safeguarding Inspection** and a **Final Child Protection and Safeguarding Inspection**. The two inspections are typically carried out in a school within a relatively short timeframe. This is a report on an Initial Child Protection and Safeguarding Inspection.

WHAT HAPPENS DURING AN INITIAL CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING INSPECTION?

During an initial CPSI, inspectors:

- Engage with learners about their learning in Social Personal and Health Education (SPHE) and Stay Safe
- Invite all parents to complete an online parent survey that explores issues relevant to school climate and parents' awareness of the school's child protection procedures, including the school's anti-bullying procedures
- Hold meetings with:
    - Designated Liaison Person (DLP) / Deputy DLP
    - Chairperson of board of management
    - A sample of school personnel
    - The SPHE coordinator
- Review the following documents:
    - Board of management minutes
    - Child safeguarding statement and risk assessment
    - Relevant school plans
    - The school's IT Acceptable Use Policy (AUP)
- Review child protection records, where these have been created.

The board of management of the school was given an opportunity to comment on the findings and recommendations of the report; the board chose to accept the report without response.

HOW TO READ THIS REPORT

The checks conducted during this inspection are based on the *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017.*

The first section of the report indicates the extent to which the school was compliant with each of the checks conducted by indicating, in respect of each of the stated checks, whether the school was:

- Fully compliant
- Substantially compliant
- Partially compliant
- Not compliant

Some of the checks may not be relevant to a particular school, for example a school that has never had a concern in relation to child protection will not have any child protection records. In such cases, the report indicates that the check does not apply to the school by stating *Not Applicable* after that particular check.

It should be noted that the term 'school personnel' as referred to in this inspection report is used as a generic term to cover all adults who are involved in the operation of the school. It covers employees and voluntary workers and includes parent association members when they are working in the school. These personnel include, for example, teachers, special needs assistants, caretakers, secretaries, cleaners, voluntary workers in the school, paid or voluntary tutors, and parent association members helping with aspects of the work of the school.

Where a school is less than fully compliant with a particular requirement, the report provides some additional evaluative comment on the check. It also advises actions that the school should take in order to comply more fully with the *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017*.

The report also provides an evaluative comment on the school's planning for and implementation of the Social Personal and Health Education Curriculum and the Stay Safe Programme/ Relationships and Sexuality Education Programme as evident during the inspection. In providing this overview, reference is made to the appropriate quality level of the Inspectorate's Quality Continuum:

- Very good
- Good
- Satisfactory
- Fair
- Weak

A *Guide to Child Protection and Safeguarding Inspections* was published on the website of the Department of Education in January 2019 and can be accessed at www.education.ie. This Guide details how CPSIs are carried out and also provides the framework used by inspectors in arriving at judgements about a school's compliance with the aspects of the *Child Protection Procedures 2017* that are checked during the inspection.

Child Protection and Safeguarding Inspection Report
The checks detailed below derive from the *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017*. These procedures are designed to ensure that schools provide a safe and secure environment for all our children and through appropriate curriculum provision, provide for the incremental development of the life skills that will empower students to keep themselves safe. In order to meet these aims, the procedures set out a number of requirements on schools relating to communicating with members of the school community about child protection matters; training of school personnel and board members in respect of child protection; reporting about child protection to the board of management; and fulfilling certain reporting and record keeping obligations in relation to child protection matters. They also detail the mandatory aspects of the curriculum that are designed to develop students' knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviours through Social Personal and Health Education (SPHE) and the *Stay Safe* programme.

Aspects of the *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017* checked	**Fully Compliant Substantially Compliant Partially Compliant Not compliant Not applicable**
1. The school has communicated the required aspects of the *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017* to relevant stakeholders.	**Substantially Compliant**
• ***Additional Information:*** School personnel and the parents' association are informed that a review of the school's child safeguarding statement has taken place. The mandatory template which should be used for this purpose, is not used. A copy of the written notification that the review of the child safeguarding statement has taken place is not placed on the school's website. • ***Action Advised***: To fulfil the requirements regarding notification of the board of management's review of the child safeguarding statement, mandatory template 4 should be completed and signed and made available to school personnel and the parents' association. The notification of the review should be published on the school's website.	
2. A Designated Liaison Person (DLP) and a deputy DLP have been appointed in line with the requirements of the *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017*.	**Fully Compliant**
3. The board of management reports that it is aware of and discharges its responsibilities to provide information to all school personnel relevant to child protection and to ensure that available training is undertaken by all or some members of staff as required.	**Substantially Compliant**
• ***Additional Information:*** The board of management has arrangements in place to ensure that all school personnel have the necessary familiarity with the procedures to enable them to fulfil their responsibilities. A number of school personnel interviewed were not fully aware of the actions to take where a concern may relate to the DLP. • ***Action Advised:*** The board of management should review the effectiveness of the procedures they have in place to provide information and training to school personnel on child protection. Particular attention	

should be paid in this review to providing information to school personnel on the correct reporting procedures where there are concerns that may relate to the DLP.	
4. The board of management reports that it is aware of its responsibilities in relation to vetting of all school personnel and report that they discharge these responsibilities.	**Fully Compliant**
5. A child safeguarding statement and risk assessment have been prepared in line with the template and requirements of the *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017.*	**Substantially Compliant**
• ***Additional Information:*** The board of management has carried out the annual review of the child safeguarding statement and it has retained a record of this review. Actions to address the areas identified for improvement are set out. A risk assessment which has regard to the school's particular context has been completed, however the mandatory template has not been used for the risk assessment. • ***Action Advised***: The risk assessment should be completed on the mandatory template which is provided with the procedures and available on the Department's website.	
6. The minutes of the board meetings that were checked contained a record of a child protection oversight report being provided in line with the requirements of the *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017*.	**Substantially Compliant**
• ***Additional Information:*** The minutes of board of management meetings that were checked during the inspection contain a child protection oversight report. The report is set out on the template provided by the Department however it does not contain all of the information required. • ***Action Advised***: Each section of the child protection oversight report should be fully completed.	
7. Correct record keeping procedures were found in the child protection cases examined.	**Not Applicable**
8. The procedures to report child protection concerns were fully implemented in the records examined.	**Not Applicable**
9. The procedures to report allegations or suspicions of abuse against school personnel were fully implemented in the records examined. *(These personnel include, for example, teachers, special needs assistants, caretakers, secretaries, cleaners, voluntary workers in the school, paid or voluntary tutors, and parent association members helping with aspects of the work of the school.)*	**Not Applicable**

10. Curriculum Check	
There is a programme for Social Personal and Health Education for all children in the school.	**Yes**
The Stay Safe Programme is implemented within the school	**Yes**

The overall quality of planning for, and implementation of the SPHE curriculum and the *Stay Safe* programme is good**.** The school plan provides an outline of the curriculum strands, and it identifies a range of resources to be used to support the delivery of the programme. There are references to the *Stay Safe* programme in the school plan for SPHE. However the plan needs to be updated so that it clearly indicates that the *Stay Safe* programme is fully implemented in the school. The teachers' plans include discrete planning for the teaching of SPHE.

During the group meetings with pupils, which were carried out during the inspection, the pupils indicated that their lessons are enjoyable and beneficial. They spoke with reasonable confidence about food and nutrition, health and well-being, feelings and emotions, and personal safety. The pupils were also able to discuss the importance of friendship and they named and described different types of bullying. While they understood the importance of never keeping secrets about inappropriate touches, they were unsure of the correct language to use for the parts of the male and female body. To support the teaching of this aspect of the SPHE curriculum, the correct terms to be taught at each class level should be included in the school plan and the implementation of the plan should be closely monitored by the SPHE co-ordinator.

All parents who responded to the parent survey as part of the inspection, agreed that the school is welcoming and that their child is treated with respect by the teachers and other school personnel. All respondents also agreed that they have been informed of the school's anti-bullying policy and child safeguarding statement A number of respondents indicated that they don't know about aspects of their child's learning in Relationships and Sexuality Education. The school should explore how the breadth of children's learning in RSE can be communicated to parents.

Published April 2022 / Foilsithe Aibreán 2022