



*Murhur N. S.*  
*Moyvane, Listowel, Co. Kerry. V31 T227*  
*Roll Number: 13540G CRN: 20123307*

☎ 068 49522 ✉ [info@murhurns.com](mailto:info@murhurns.com) [www.murhurns.com](http://www.murhurns.com)

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## **Child Protection Policy 2023-2024**

### **Introduction**

The Board of Management (BOM) recognises that child protection and welfare considerations permeate all aspects of school life and must be reflected in all of the school's policies, practices and activities. Accordingly, in accordance with the requirements of the Department of Education and Skills, 'Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools' (DES 2017), the BOM of Murhur N.S has agreed the following child protection policy:

1. The BOM has adopted and will implement fully and without modification the Department's Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools (2017) as part of this overall child protection policy.
2. The **Designated Liaison Person (DLP)** is **Francesca Hunt**
3. The **Deputy Designated Liaison Person (Deputy DLP)** is **MaryB. Curtin**
4. In its policies, practices and activities, Murhur N.S. will adhere to the following principles of best practice in child protection and welfare:

The school will

- recognise that the protection and welfare of children is of paramount importance, regardless of all other considerations;
  - fully co-operate with the relevant statutory authorities in relation to child protection and welfare matters;
  - adopt safe practices to minimise the possibility of harm or accidents happening to children and protect workers from the necessity to take unnecessary risks that may leave themselves open to accusations of abuse or neglect;
  - develop a practice of openness with parents / guardians and encourage parental involvement in the education of their children; and
  - fully respect confidentiality requirements in dealing with child protection matters.
1. The following Murhur N.S. policies are particularly relevant to this Child Protection Policy:
    - Code of Behaviour
    - Anti-bullying Policy
    - Pupil Attendance Policy
    - Supervision of Pupils Policy
    - Special Needs Policy
    - Critical Incident Policy.
    - Acceptable Use Policy
    - SNA Policy
    - GDPR Policy

Please see Appendix 1 attached to this policy for a list of Best Practices that are relevant to Child Protection. The BOM has ensured that the necessary policies, protocols or practices as appropriate are in place in respect of each of the above listed items and the practices in Appendix 1.

This Child Protection Policy is also particularly relevant to the participation by pupils in: Sporting Activities, School Outings/Trips and extra-curricular activities. All other practices and activities, where child protection might have particular relevance, will take due consideration of the procedures outlined within this policy. See Appendix 1.

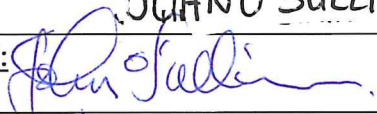
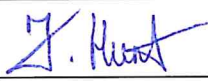
The Stay Safe Programme will be taught Senior Infants, second class, fourth class and sixth class throughout the school. The Strand Unit "Safety and Protection" will be addressed at each class level in the context of the Stay Safe programme.

1. This policy has been made available to school personnel and the Parent Teacher Partnership and is readily accessible to parents / guardians on request. A copy of the Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment is available on the school website (www.murhurns.com). A copy of this policy will be made available to the Department and the patron if requested. The name of the DLP/DDLP and other relevant support services are displayed in the Safeguarding Statement near the main entrance to the school/Office.

1. This policy will be reviewed by the BOM yearly in conjunction with the Child Protection Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment. A checklist to be used in undertaking the review is included at Appendix 2. The school will put in place an action plan to address any areas for improvement which might be identified in the annual review. A record of the review and its outcome shall be made available, if requested, to the patron and the DES.

## Ratification and Communication

The Board of Management of Murhur N.S. ratified this policy 13/10/2023.

<u>Chairperson:</u> JOHN O'SULLIVAN	<u>Principal:</u> FRANCESCA HUNT
<u>Signed:</u> 	<u>Signed:</u> 
<u>Date:</u> 13/10/2023	<u>Date:</u> 13/10/2023

This policy is available to view on the school's website.

To be reviewed annually.

### References

- Children First- National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children (Department of Children & Youth Affairs, 2017)
- Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools (DES, 2017)

## Appendix 1 – Murhur N.S. Child Protection Best Practises

As a whole school staff, we have drawn up the following best practice guidelines for situations particular to our school. Following discussion and consultation, the staff and BOM have agreed that the following practices be adopted:

## **SUPERVISION**

### **Collections**

Parents / guardians will nominate in advance those who are to collect their children. They will inform the teacher via the usual communication channels and before 12.30 pm if there is to be any change to pick ups. Staff will not release a child to anyone other than the parents / guardians unless the parents / guardians have indicated same to teacher/office. 3<sup>rd</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> Class, a parent/guardian can give permission for their child to go home alone from school. Once written permission has been submitted to the school the teacher will allow these children to go home alone.

### **Late Collections**

Children not collected within 5 minutes of release time should be brought to the office so parents / guardians can be contacted.

### **Incidents on Yard**

Yard incidents (both in terms of injury and behaviour) will be recorded in a log book and teachers will be informed of them at the end of break.

### **Sick Children**

If a child is too sick to remain in school, they will remain under the supervision of a staff member in their classroom/office until they are collected.

### **Guest Teacher/Visitor/ Volunteer**

All visitors to the school are expected to report to the office on arrival. Visitors are not permitted to walk around the school unless accompanied by a member of staff during school times.

The class teacher **must** remain with their class at all times whenever there is a visitor/guest speaker/ volunteer in the classroom. The class teacher must provide adequate supervision at all time.

The school has a responsibility to check out the credentials of the visitor/guest speaker and to ensure that the material in use is appropriate. Likewise, the school has a responsibility to ensure Garda vetting has been received if required.

### **Yard Supervision**

The school's supervision policy will be followed by all staff to ensure that there is comprehensive supervision of children at all breaks. A rota will be distributed to all staff to cover morning and lunchtime breaks. (See Supervision Policy for agreed rules around break-times and procedures around teacher absences.)

Staff will ensure that children are visible in the school playground. At break times children will not be allowed to spend time in classrooms, toilets or areas where they would not be under adult supervision. They are not to leave the school playground or to engage with adults who are outside of the school playground. Adults are not permitted to enter the playground or school building without first going to the office.

Teaching staff must ensure that if they are the last to enter the school the gate should be locked. No class should be left in the yard unsupervised. If a class has not been collected, the last teacher on yard should wait until the final teacher has arrived.

### **Visibility**

In the event that teachers find themselves on their own in the classroom with a child, they should ensure they are visible by having blinds open and door open. The window panel of the classroom door where SET interventions are taking place should be clear at all times i.e. no artwork obscuring view into the room.

### **Late Arrivals / Early Collections**

Once parents have notified the school of an early collection a permission slip is created by the teacher for the parent / guardian to sign before child is released. Class teachers record late arrivals on Aladdin.

## **Communication**

If teachers have to communicate with pupils on a one-to-one basis, they should do so within sight of the rest of the class/ or a staff member, especially if the conversation is of a sensitive nature.

## **Privacy**

### **Swimming**

For swimming lessons, a second staff member will be assigned to support the class teacher. Boys and Girls use the individual cubicles. Parent volunteers may support if required but must be vetted in advance. Only staff members will enter the dressing rooms.

If a parent requests to help their own child to change they can make that request in advance and use a cubicle for this purpose.

### **Changing for Games/Afterschool Sports Activities in school – Older Classes**

The classrooms can be used for groups to change in. Adults should not be present in these rooms unless supervision is deemed necessary for behaviour reasons. If this is the case, two adults should be present. Under no circumstances will members of staff/volunteers be expected to or allowed to dress/undress a child in a private area. Any parents / guardians changing their child can use one of the Accessible Toilets.

### **Toileting Accidents / Intimate Care needs**

See Toileting Policy

## **Toilets**

It is school policy that two children are not permitted to enter the toilet area at a time. Children who need to use the toilet during yard time must seek the permission of the adult on duty. Teachers should encourage children to use toilet before playtimes.

Hand-washing in the senior room – pods wash their hands at the same time, class teacher supervises this and the classroom from the doorway.

## **Physical contact**

Physical contact between school personnel and the child should always be in response to the needs of the child and not the needs of the adult. Excluding essential comforting, any physical contact should be avoided. Instigating comforting behaviour is avoided unless the child is extremely upset. In these situations staff should '*comfort with caution*'. Then, limited strategies can be used. While physical contact may be used to comfort, reassure or assist the child, the following should be factors in determining its appropriateness:

- the age and developmental stage of the child
- if it is acceptable to the child
- if it is open and not secretive

School personnel should avoid doing anything of a personal nature for children that they can do for themselves.

Physical restraint of a child is to be avoided at all costs, unless the safety of the child or others is at risk.

## Professional conduct

### Staff Conduct

School personnel should never engage in or allow:

- The use of inappropriate language, including sarcasm, ridiculing and insulting
- The use of inappropriate behaviour, including rough play
- Physical punishment of any kind

### Teaching Resources

All books, pictures, photos and media products (CDs, DVDs, films, you-tube videos, etc.) should be checked by the teacher for their appropriateness with regard to age and suitability. **Only Universal or General graded films should be shown in school on reward days/end of term.**

### Code of Behaviour

All children should be treated equally by all staff members as per Code of Behaviour.

### Storage of Sensitive Records

All documentation including sensitive information should be kept in a locked filing cabinet at all times. Documentation regarding a child's special educational needs is kept in the Office and relevant teachers can access it there. The SENCO will also have relevant documents on Sharepoint with access given to relevant teachers. Incident Records referring to serious misbehaviours and/or child protection are kept in the Office and are only shared with relevant staff.

When recording, remember all information regarding a child can be requested and read by a parent under the Freedom of Information Act 2014, whether stored in paper format or electronically, including emails. Only facts should be recorded on the Incident Record Form (See Appendix 5). The child's clár uimhir number (available on Aladdin) should be used when recording information about child protection. If handing records to parents / guardians, please ensure all other children's names are blacked out completely. (If the DLP or DDLP feels the incident needs to be referred further they will refer via the Tusla Portal).

All educational files of pupils who no longer attend this school are kept in storage in locked filing cabinets.

### Confidentiality

Sensitive information regarding children should only be shared on a need-to-know basis.

All incidents on yard, etc. should be reported to the child's class teacher who will note it appropriately. However, if the incident is of immediate concern due to child protection, the report should be made straight to the DLP/ DDLP.

If a teacher has a concern about a child and that child has a sibling in the school, they cannot confer with the other child's class teacher. Concerns should only be discussed with the DLP.

### Internet Safety

Please see the Acceptable Use Policy. Internet safety education evolves quickly in response to changes in technologies being used by children and as such so does teaching & learning around internet safety. We keep up-to-date with publications from Webwise.ie and use their programmes alongside the curriculum.

## **Other**

### **Recruitment procedures and requirements for Garda Vetting**

Murhur N.S. ensures that it is compliant with all department circulars and all legal requirements in relation to Garda vetting of school personnel.

All visitors/tradespeople/delivery persons to the school must wait at reception until they have spoken to the secretary or a member of staff. They can only enter the building after they have signed in and visitors must be accompanied by a staff member at all times in the school building. Regular visitors to the school will be vetted.

### **Attendance**

School attendance is monitored carefully. With regards to Child Protection, we will pay particular attention to trends in non-attendance. We will also monitor non-attendance especially coupled with signs of neglect/physical/emotional abuse. We ask parents / guardians to contact the school on the day of absence explaining the reason for absence.

TUSLA will be informed of any concerns relating to a child's attendance. We will issue a standard letter (using a template from TUSLA) to notify parents / guardians when their child has missed 10 days and again when their child has missed 15. Parents / guardians will be notified when their child has missed 20 days during a school year.

Children who miss 20 days or more will also be reported to TUSLA in accordance with legislation. The principal will contact the Education Welfare Officer if they are concerned regarding a child's attendance in a year or if a pattern of poor attendance is emerging.

### **Behaviour**

Children are to be encouraged at all times to play co-operatively and to show respect for themselves and others. Our positive Code of Behaviour Policy clarifies this. If an incident occurs which we consider to be of a sexualised nature the DLP is informed who will record it and respond to it appropriately.

### **Bullying**

Bullying behaviour will be addressed under our Anti-Bullying policy. If the behaviour involved is of a sexualised nature or regarded as being particularly abusive, then the matter will be referred to the DLP.

## **Induction of Staff**

### **Child Protection Policy**

The Principal/Deputy Principal will inform all new staff members of this policy, which has been drawn up in line with the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary (2017) Children First – National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children (2017).

The school staff will receive training on Child Protection regularly. All teachers are expected to teach the designated SPHE objectives to their class.

The DLP and DDLP will attend available training in Child Protection to ensure confidence in implementing their responsibilities.

### **Induction of Pupils**

All parents / guardians and children will be made aware of attendance rules and their implications as laid down in the Education Welfare Act (2000). All parents / guardians/guardians will be informed of the programmes in place in the school that deal with personal development in the SPHE curriculum.

All new parents / guardians will be informed of the procedures parents / guardians/guardians and children should use when contacting the school if there are absences or concerns of an educational/personal/family

matter. Parents / guardians/guardians are encouraged to make an appointment with the class teacher/principal if they wish to discuss their child's progress. All parents / guardians will be asked to read the schools Code of Behaviour and Anti-Bullying policy.

**It is also important to note that while every effort should be made to adhere to agreed best practice, in the event of an emergency or unforeseen occurrence, this may not be possible or practicable. In such instances, a full record of the incident should be made and reported to the principal, parents / guardians of children involved and BOM, as appropriate.**

## Appendix 2 – Murhur N.S. Checklist for Annual Review of the Child Protection Policy



*Murhur N. S.*  
*Moyvane, Listowel, Co. Kerry. V31 T227*  
*Roll Number: 13540G CRN: 20123307*

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### Murhur N.S. Checklist for Annual Review of the Child Protection Policy

The *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017* require that the Board of Management must undertake a review of its Child Safeguarding Statement and that the following checklist shall be used for this purpose. The review must be completed every year or as soon as practicable after there has been a material change in any matter to which the Child Safeguarding Statement refers. Undertaking an annual review will also ensure that a school also meets its statutory obligation under section 11(8) of the Children First Act 2015 to review its Child Safeguarding Statement every two years.

The checklist is designed as an aid to conducting this review and is not intended as an exhaustive list of the issues to be considered. Individual Boards of Management shall include other items in the checklist that are of relevance to the school in question.

As part of the overall review process, Boards of Management should also assess relevant school policies, procedures, practices and activities vis a vis their adherence to the principles of best practice in child protection and the welfare as set out in the school's Child Safeguarding Statement, the Children First Act 2015 and the *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017*.

	Yes/No
1. Has the Board formally adopted a Child Safeguarding Statement in accordance with the 'Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools 2017'?	
1. As part of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement, has the Board formally adopted, without modification, the 'Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools 2017'?	
1. Does the school's Child Safeguarding Statement include a written assessment of risk as required under the Children First Act 2015?	
1. Has the Board reviewed and updated where necessary the written assessment of risk as part of this overall review?	
1. Has the DLP attended available child protection training?	
1. Has the Deputy DLP attended available child protection training?	
1. Have any members of the Board attended child protection training?	
1. Are there both a DLP and a Deputy DLP currently appointed?	
1. Are the relevant contact details (Tusla and An Garda Síochána) to hand?	
1. Has the Board arrangements in place to communicate the school's Child Safeguarding	



Statement to new school personnel?	
1. Is the Board satisfied that all school personnel have been made aware of their responsibilities under the 'Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools 2017' and the Children First Act 2015?	
1. Has the Board received a Principals Child Protection Oversight Report (CPOR) at each Board meeting held since the last review was undertaken?	
1. Since the Board's last review, did each CPOR contain all of the information required under each of the 4 headings set out in sections 9.5 to 9.8 inclusive of the procedures?	
1. Since the Board's last review, has the Board been provided with and reviewed all documents relevant to the CPOR?	
1. Since the Board's last review, have the minutes of each Board meeting appropriately recorded the records provided to the Board as part of CPOR report?	
1. Have the minutes of each Board meeting appropriately recorded the CPOR report?	
1. Is the Board satisfied that the child protection procedures in relation to the making of reports to Tusla/An Garda Síochána were appropriately followed in each case reviewed?	
1. Is the Board satisfied that, since the last review, all appropriate actions are being or have been taken in respect of any member of school personnel against whom an allegation of abuse or neglect has been made?*	
1. Where applicable, were unique identifiers used to record child protection matters in the Board minutes?	
1. Is the Board satisfied that all records relating to child protection are appropriately filed and stored securely?	
1. Has the Board been notified by any parent in relation to that parent not receiving the standard notification required under section 5.6 of the 'Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools 2017'?	
1. In relation to any cases identified at question 21 above, has the Board ensured that any notifications required under section 5.6 of the 'Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools 2017' were subsequently issued by the DLP?	
1. Has the Board ensured that the Parents / guardians' Association (if any), has been provided with the school's Child Safeguarding Statement?	
1. Has the Board ensured that the patron has been provided with the school's Child Safeguarding Statement?	
1. Has the Board ensured that the school's Child Safeguarding Statement is available to parents / guardians on request?	
1. Has the Board ensured that the Stay Safe programme is implemented in full in the school? (applies to primary schools)	
1. Has the Board ensured that the Wellbeing Programme for Junior Cycle students is implemented in full in the school? (applies to post- primary schools)	
1. Has the Board ensured that the SPHE curriculum is implemented in full in the school?	
1. Is the Board satisfied that the statutory requirements for Garda Vetting have been met in respect of all school personnel (employees and volunteers)? *	
1. Is the Board satisfied that the Department's requirements in relation to the provision of a child protection related statutory declaration and associated form of undertaking have been met in respect of persons appointed to teaching and non-teaching positions?*	
1. Is the Board satisfied that, from a child protection perspective, thorough recruitment and selection procedures are applied by the school in relation to all school personnel (employees and volunteers)?*	
1. Has the Board considered and addressed any complaints or suggestions for improvements regarding the school's Child Safeguarding Statement?	
1. Has the Board sought the feedback of parents / guardians in relation to the school's compliance with the requirements of the child safeguarding requirements of the 'Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools 2017'?	
1. Has the Board sought the feedback of pupils in relation to the school's child	

safeguarding arrangements?	
1. Is the Board satisfied that the 'Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools 2017' are being fully and adequately implemented by the school?	
1. Has the Board identified any aspects of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement and/or its implementation that require further improvement?	
1. Has the Board put in place an action plan containing appropriate timelines to address those aspects of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement and/or its implementation that have been identified as requiring further improvement ?	
1. Has the Board ensured that any areas for improvement that were identified in any previous review of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement have been adequately addressed?	

\*In schools where the ETB is the employer the responsibility for meeting the employer's requirements rests v the ETB concerned. In such cases, this question should be completed following consultation with the ETB.

<u>Chairperson:</u>		<u>Principal:</u>	
<u>Signed:</u>		<u>Signed:</u>	
<u>Date:</u>		<u>Date:</u>	

Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management

**Note:** Where a school is undertaking its first review, references in this checklist to the "last review" shall be ta to refer to the date on which the Child Safeguarding Statement was first put in place.

## Appendix 3 – Murhur N.S. Child Protection Relevant Contact Details

**Murhur N. S.**

**Moyvane, Listowel, Co. Kerry.**

068 49522 - 087 2805657 info@murhurns.com

www.murhurns.com

### Murhur N.S. Child Protection Relevant Contact Details

The following contact numbers should be used to contact the appropriate authorities

Title	Name & Telephone
Designated Liaison Person (DLP)	Francesca Hunt 087 989 5139
Deputy Designated Liaison Person (DDLDP)	Mary B. Curtin 068-49522
Listowel Garda Station	Ph: 068-50827
HSE Work Manager (Area )	Tusla Child and Family, Unit 7/8, Block 1, Reeks Gateway, Cleeney Roundabout, Killarney, Co. Kerry Ph: 064-6636030

## Appendix 4 – Murhur N.S. Procedures for dealing with a disclosure

### Procedures in dealing with a disclosure/suspicion from a child/third party

- Teachers/Staff who suspect child abuse/neglect should report their concerns to the DLP at the first instance
- If concerns begin to occur overtime teachers should carefully record their observations. What can seem innocuous as a once off may suggest something in need of further examination if a pattern occurs over time.
- Disclosures of Child Abuse/neglect from a third party will be reported to the DLP. If a third party starts to tell a teacher about an alleged child abuse incident the teacher will ask them to speak to the DLP. If the person does not inform the DLP the teacher will do so.
- Where a child discloses alleged abuse/neglect to a staff member, the person receiving that information should listen carefully and supportively. **IT IS NOT THE ROLE OF ANY STAFF MEMBER OR DLP TO INVESTIGATE AN INCIDENT/ALLEGATION/SUSPICION. HIS/HER ROLE IS TO LISTEN AND RECORD INFORMATION.** Great care must be taken not to abuse the child's trust. This should not be a formal interview.
  - Listen to the child
  - Do not ask leading questions or make suggestions to the child
  - Offer reassurance but do not make promises
  - Do not stop a child recalling significant events
  - Do not over-react
  - If a child asks you to keep the disclosure a secret explain to the child that further help may have to be sought so you may have to tell someone else.
  - Record the discussion on Incident Record accurately noting:
    - What, where and when?**
    - Descriptions and possible sketches of physical injuries
    - Explanations of injuries using direct quotations if appropriate
    - Sign and date the record – use the child's roll number not name Year – Letter-Number (e.g.) 13-14 A15
    - Retain the record securely
    - Contact the DLP/DDLP who will advise from that point.
- Whether cases of abuse/neglect are suspected or confirmed, confidentiality will be respected. The information on individual cases will be restricted to the teacher(s) immediately involved with the child and will be on a *need to know* basis.
- The DLP will record the incident. It is not the function of the teacher or the DLP to investigate the issue.
- If the suspected abuser is the DLP then the suspicion and any records will be passed on to Director of Schools – Ken Scully who can be reached at KWETB Naas Office or kenscully@kwetb.ie.
- The BOM may be informed of the disclosure in the Child Protection Oversight Report (CPOR)
- Informal contact with the designated person in the Child and Family Protection Service will be made, seeking advice as to whether a referral should be made. The DLP will be explicit that s/he is requesting advice and not making a report. It is not necessary at this stage for the DLP to disclose his/her name or the name of the school.
- The advice given by Tusla - Child and Family will be acted upon.
- If the advice is not to refer, the DLP will record this advice as the reason for non-referral.
- If the advice from Tusla is to refer the case, the DLP/DDLP will do so using the Tusla Portal. However, prior to referring, the DLP will inform the parent of his/her intention to refer, unless this course of action is injurious to the child.
- Following referral and the completion of the Standard Report Form, the school will have no further part to play in the investigation.
- If a case conference is required, the DLP will be invited to attend.

**All records will be held in a central, securely locked location.**

## Appendix 5 - Murhur N.S. Incident Record Form

**TO BE USED WHEN RECORDING INCIDENTS/DISCLOSURES OF A CHILD PROTECTION NATURE –  
PLEASE COMPLETE FORM AS PER CHILD PROTECION POLICY AND GIVE FORMS TO DLP  
FRANCESCA HUNT. CURTIN AND DDLP MARYB. CUERTIN WITH ANY CONCERNS**

CLÁR UIMHIR OF CHILD: \_\_\_\_\_

Date	Adult	Incident

Attached sheet 1

