

Ελληνική Κοινότητα  
Ιρλανδίας



Pobal Heilléanach  
na hÉireann

# Hellenic Community of Ireland

## Child Protection Policy

First Ratified at the Board of Management Meeting December 2018

Reviewed annually

LATEST REVIEW OCTOBER 2019

Signed: Nadia Foutsou Date: 5th September 2019

Ms Xanthi Bacogianni, Designated Liaison Person, teacher

Ms Vasso Ploumbi, Deputy Designated Liaison Person, Teacher

Ms Nadia Foutsou, Deputy Designated Liaison Person, parent, member of the Board

Stella Xenopoulou, President on the Board of the Hellenic Community

Hellenic Community Board of Management

Date of next review: June 2020

The Designated Liaison Person (DLP) is **Nadia Foutsou (Education Officer)**. She has specific responsibility for child protection and will represent the school in all dealings with the HSE, Tusla, Gardaí and other parties in relation to abuse.

The Deputy Designated Liaison Persons (Deputy DLP) are Ms Xanthi Bakogianni (**TEG -School teacher**) and Ms Vasiliki Ploumbi (**TEG – School teacher**) who will deal with the above in the absence of Nadia Foutsou.



**Introduction:** This policy document has been drawn up by the staff, parents and the Board of Management of Hellenic Community of Ireland in response to recent changes in legislation. The policy takes account of the provisions of the following legislation:

The Education Act 1998, The Education Welfare Act 2000, The Protection of Persons reporting Child Abuse Act 1993, *Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act 2004* and Safety, Health at Work Act 2005.

The Board of Management 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, the Board of Management of Hellenic Community of Ireland has agreed the following child protection policy:

The Board of Management has adopted and will implement fully and without modification the Department's Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools as part of this overall child protection policy. **These are based on the Children First National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2011.**

In its policies, practices and activities, HCI 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 and encourage parental involvement in the education of their children; and
- fully respect confidentiality requirements in dealing with child protection matters

*The school will also adhere to the above principles in relation to any pupil with a special vulnerability and make every effort to ensure that the children with Special Education Needs, once identified and advised to HCI by the child's parents or guardians in order to understand how to report concerns.*

The Child Protection Policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies/practices which have been formulated with Child Protection Guidelines in mind

Code of Behaviour, Anti-Bullying Policy, Pupil Attendance Policy, Supervision of Pupil, Garda Vetting Policy and procedures, Health and Safety statement and related policies, What to do in the event of a suspicion of child abuse or neglect (Appendix 2 to this policy) and Advice to teachers in the event of disclosure (Appendix 3 to this policy)

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The Board has ensured that the necessary policies, protocols or practices as appropriate are in place in respect of each of the above listed items.

This policy has been made available to school personnel and the Parents and is readily available to parents on request or on the HCI website. A copy of this policy will be made available to the Department and the patron if requested. A document showing the name of the DLP and Deputy DLP will be displayed in a prominent place in the school website section of HCI. The policy will also be available to all on the school's website [helleniccommunity.ie](http://helleniccommunity.ie)

This policy and our school's practice will be reviewed by staff on an annual basis, usually at the first Community and Education Officer's meeting of the new academic year. All teachers (as of school year 2019-2020) will have received training in Child Protection Policy and Procedures. All Teachers will be made aware of and be familiar with the correct practice and procedures in relation to child protection at the first staff meeting of every year.

The HCI Committee will review this policy on an annual basis, using Checklist for Annual Review of Child Protection (Appendix 2 Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post primary Schools, P.39)

In line with the DES Child Protection Procedures and Practice Guidelines 2011 (p.8) the Stay Safe programme and the Social, Personal and Health Education programmes will be fully implemented in the school.

All information regarding concerns of possible child abuse should be only shared on a confidential and need to know basis, in the interest of the child.

This policy was last reviewed by the Board of Management on September 5<sup>th</sup> 2019

Signed: \_\_Stella Xenopoulou\_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_Nadia Foutsou\_\_\_\_\_

**HCI Committee Members:**

**Education Officer:**

Date: \_\_5<sup>th</sup> September 2019\_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_5<sup>th</sup> September 2019\_\_\_\_\_

Date of next review: **June 2020**

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### **Appendix 1 to the Child Protection Policy**

Records of incidents:

Records of incidents should be kept by the Education Officer

Children with Specific Care Needs:

Parents will be notified of any changes from agreed procedures

Sample letter included below

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#### **H.C.I. School**

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

Dear Parent/Guardian,

\_\_\_\_\_ had an accident at school today.

The persons attended to the incident were:

The following actions were taken:

Yours sincerely,



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## **Appendix 2: Child Protection Policy HCI School**

### **What to do in the event of suspicion of child abuse or neglect**

If a member of staff suspects that a child has been abused/neglected, is being abused/neglected or is at risk of being abused or neglected, he/she will without delay report the suspicions to the DLP. This is to be done formally in the presence of the DLP and in private. The DLP will listen to the concerns and decide the course of action to be taken by the school. The member of staff may be asked to do one or all of the following: write up his/her concerns, to monitor and record any further concerns as they arise or to assist the DLP in making a formal report to the Social Work Department of the HSE (See standard reporting form DES Guidelines Appendix 4, p.49).

The DLP may seek advice from the HSE re the issue. Any report to the HSE or any advice sought from the HSE will be reported to the Education Officer of the HCI Committee as soon as possible and will be reported to the HCI Committee at their next meeting. The DLP will follow the DES Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Children 2011



### **Appendix 3: Advice to members of staff on handling disclosures from Children**

An abused child is likely to be under severe emotional stress and staff members may be the only adult whom the child is prepared to trust. Great care should be taken not to damage that trust.

When information is offered in confidence, the member of staff will need tact and sensitivity in responding to the disclosure. The member of staff will need to reassure the child and retain his/her trust while explaining the need for action and the possible consequence, which will necessarily involve other adults being informed. It is important to tell the child that everything possible will be done to protect and support him/her, but not to make promises that cannot be kept e.g. promising not to tell anyone else. While the basis for concern must be established as comprehensively as possible, the following advice is offered to school personnel to whom a child makes a disclosure of abuse.

Listen to the child

Do not ask leading questions nor make suggestions to the child

Offer reassurance but do not make promises

Do not stop a child recalling significant events

Do not react

Explain that further help may have to be sought

Record the discussion accurately and retain the record

This written information should be given to and retained by the DLP

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#### **Appendix 4: Child Protection Policy**

##### **Reporting Procedures for DLP and in her absence Deputy DLP**

DLP receives report of child protection concern

DLP records the report – date/time/context.

DLP makes decision on how to proceed based on information received

DLP informs HCI Committee that initial contact is being made with Health Board

DLP makes contact with Health Board seeking advice (Do not give name of child at this point. Be very clear that you are seeking advice). Take the name of the person you spoke to and record conversation

Duty Social Worker makes recommendation. This may involve school continuing to monitor the situation. Record this decision and send written record of this decision to Health Board. Alternatively, a formal referral made on standard reporting form may be recommended by Social Worker (Keep a copy on file in a secure place)

If Health Board not available and case warrants immediate response – Gardaí are informed

Decision made on informing/not informing parents - taking safety of the child into consideration as number one priority. A decision NOT to inform parent/s should only be made where there is a genuine concern for the safety of the child. Be transparent with parent/s and ensure that they are aware that you have a non-negotiable responsibility as DLP to act in the best interests of the child (Refer to Children First)

If DLP decides not to contact Health Board in relation to the case – person who made original report must be informed in writing

Continued monitoring of child should be recommended



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Child Protection concerns that have been reported to the Health Board should be included in the Principal's Report to Board of Management Meeting - Child's name is not used

**IMPORTANT TELEPHONE NUMBERS:**

President HCI: Stella Xenopoulou, 0872305085

Health Board HSE: 01 6352000

Gardaí: Local Numbers: Bridewell Garda Station: 01 666 8200

Local Children's Hospital: Temple Street Children's University Hospital, Temple Street, Rotunda, Dublin: 01 8784200

LOCAL GP: please provide 3 GP's: Dr Clarke, Manor Street, Dublin 7 ,  
Tel.: 01 8386319

Dr Panos Loumakis, The Village **Medical Centre**, 45-47 main Street, **Finglas East**,  
Dublin 11 Tel.: . 01-8341124

Dr. Maurice **Brennan** (GMS) 66 **Manor Street, Dublin 7** Tel: (01) 8683052

CAPP (Stay Safe Programme): 01 6206346



## **Appendix 5: Staff Training**

Child protection is itemised on the 1<sup>st</sup> staff meeting of every school year. Teachers review Child protection guidelines in brief and advise School Committee who the DLP and Deputy DLP.

Education Officer reinforces the need for confidentiality in child protection issues.

Teachers are reminded that if they have a child protection concern, they discuss that at a formal meeting with the DLP or Deputy DLP where a decision will be made as how to proceed.

Teachers are reminded that they need to familiarise themselves with the school's policy on child protection and toileting and intimate care policy.

Teachers are also advised that it is their duty to familiarise themselves with the Children First document and the Child Protection Guidelines and Procedures 2001 (DES) upon which the school's policy is based.