

Child Protection Procedures and Practices



Information Booklet



www.pdst.ie

All resources in this booklet and referred to during the sessions are available to download from **www.pdst.ie**

Helpline Numbers

**National Adult Counselling Service
1800 477 477**

INTO Employee Assistance 1800 411 057

One In Four 01 6624070

Rape Crisis Centre 1800 77 88 88

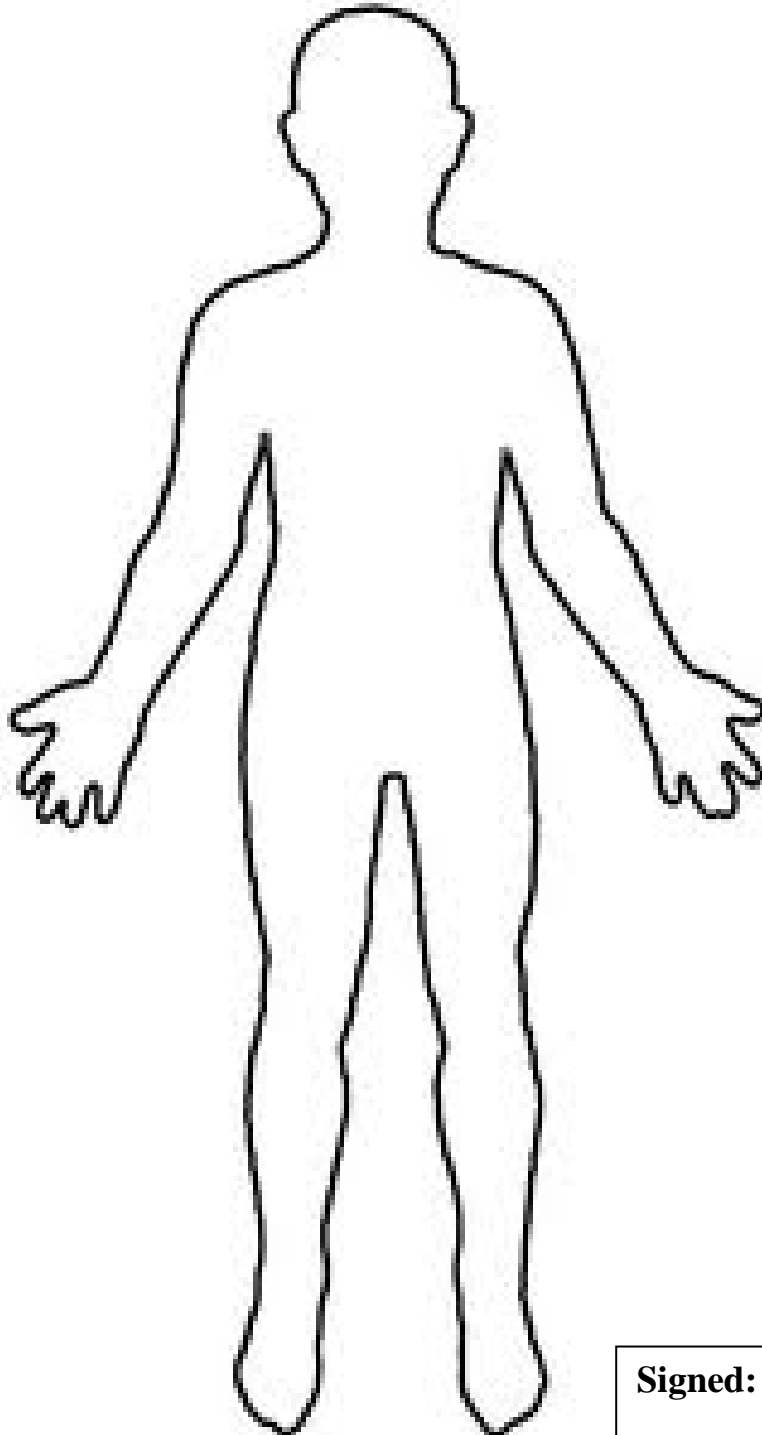
Sample record

Sample record		
Code		
Date	Observation	Signed

Code:

Date:

Indicate signs of injury, if necessary, on outline below:



Signed:

Monitoring Suggestions

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 Procedures, p. 21/22, paragraph 3.6*). 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, p. 28, paragraph 4.5.7*). This hand-out has been created to assist teachers in this regard.

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

Possible Areas for Monitoring	Best Practice Suggestions
<p>Name of School <i>Using agreed record form ensure school standard is applied</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Record observations using code to protect anonymity of child • Keep in secure place • Strictly confidential
<p>Attendance and Punctuality <i>Dates and times are important, since patterns or absence or lateness can be very revealing. If late, note if brought to school by parent/carer/older sibling and record any explanation offered.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remember to sign and date each entry
<p>Appearance, Hygiene and Care <i>Record observations of the child's appearance, for example, poor hygiene, inappropriate clothing, no lunch.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Record observations in chronological order
<p>Physical Injury <i>Give detailed description including, in the child's or carer's own words, if any explanation is offered.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include sketch of injury, if appropriate
<p>Child's Behaviour <i>A child may become increasingly aggressive, tense, unresponsive or show other signs of distress. Any sexualised behaviour should be noted.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe what you have observed factually
<p>Child's Language <i>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.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Record child's exact words, not the adult equivalents
<p>Child's Drawings, Writing or Play <i>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."</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remember context can be very important
<p>Mood Changes <i>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 recording.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Note time, context and situation – facts only

Remember monitoring should be systematic, continuous and requires perseverance

Sample letter from school to parents/guardians/carers

Name of School
Address
Phone number
Date

Dear Parents/Guardians/Carers,

In recent years, as a society, we have become very aware of the problem of child abuse through neglect, emotional, physical or sexual abuse.

Each one of us has a duty to protect children and *Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children* (2011) notes that teachers, who are the main care givers to children outside the family, are particularly well placed to observe and monitor children for signs of abuse.

In response to this, the Department of Education and Skills published *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools* (2011) in relation to child protection and welfare. These procedures promote the safety and welfare of all children and are to be welcomed.

The Board of Management of School X has adopted these procedures as school policy. Consequently, if school staff suspect or are alerted to possible child abuse (neglect, emotional, physical and/or sexual abuse) they are obliged to refer this matter to Children and Family Service of the HSE. The HSE will then assess the situation and provide support for the child concerned. In our school the Designated Liaison Person for dealing with Child Protection is _____.

Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children may be accessed on the website of the Department of Children and Youth Affairs (www.dcyf.ie) and the Department of Education and Skills *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools* can be read on the Department's website (www.education.ie). Parents/Guardians are also welcome to look through the procedures and Child Protection Policy here at the school.

Yours etc.,

Action Plan

Target: To address areas for improvement in child protection following review of the school’s child protection policy

Tasks: What steps do we need to take	Who will do it?	When will it be done by?	Complete ongoing deferred

Sample record for Child Protection Conference

Possible areas for comment

Child's details	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Name, age, school etc.
Academic performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Work and attainment during this year ✓ Any notable changes from previous years
Behaviour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ School yard, classroom ✓ Any significant changes in behaviour
Social skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Interaction with adults, peers ✓ Does child interact with own age, older or younger children
Talents and activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Any activities child engaged with
Schooling issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Attendance, clothes, sleep ✓ Parental involvement with education ✓ Concerns regarding behaviour ✓ Other children in family
Educational assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Child's progress - current situation, future needs

Welcome to Scoil Anyplace

Start time	
Finish time	
Break times	
Breaktime practices <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Supervision - Collection - Toilet breaks 	
Playground incidents/accidents	
First aid	
Fire exit	

Please check notice board in staff room for the following timetables:

1. PE
2. Computers
3. Library
4. Assembly
5. Child Protection Procedures – see information on reverse

Child Protection Procedures – Scoil Anyplace

Designated Liaison Person: _____

Deputy Designated Liaison Person: _____

- All concerns/disclosures involving Child Protection or child welfare issues will in the first instance be reported to the DLP
- In the absence of the DLP, the Deputy DLP will be informed
- All staff must adhere to maintaining confidentiality

Practices in Scoil Anyplace in relation to Child Protection:

For example: Toileting accidents, one to one teaching, guest speakers, collection of pupils, changing for games etc.