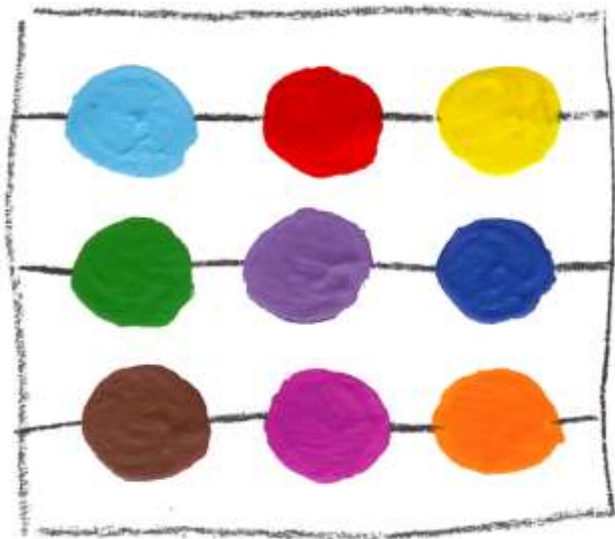


# Safeguarding Staff - Safeguarding Children Policy



*Carrigaline Educate Together N.S.*

This document is intended to provide details of the main policies of Carrigaline Educate Together National School (CETNS) in relation to the Safe-guarding of staff and children. It is intended to help parents and guardians understand the environment and approach of the school. This document is regularly reviewed. All feedback is encouraged and welcome.

<b>Version</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Authors</b>
April/May 2016	First version of policy	Board of Management

### **School Contact Details**

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# Safeguarding Staff-Safeguarding Children Policy

## Introductory Statement

This policy was drafted as a collaborative exercise between the Board of Management (BoM), staff and parents. Members of the Policy Committee formulated this policy in collaboration with the rest of the committee. It will be presented to the Board of Management for ratification. This policy is reviewed on a regular basis. The Board of Management, teachers and parents are responsible for the implementation of the policy.

## Rationale

The policy as outlined was put in place to:

- Clarify areas of responsibility
- Prevent the occurrence of any aggressive and/or violent behaviours
- Manage any incidents which do occur in the appropriate and correct manner
- Ensure all members of staff receive the minimum level of training acceptable within the school

## Relationship to the characteristic spirit of the school

The Safeguarding Staff Safeguarding Children Policy supports the ethos of Carrigaline Educate Together National School.

Carrigaline Educate Together N.S. is one of a rapidly increasing number of multi-denominational schools throughout the country. The representative organisation for these schools is 'Educate Together'.

Educate Together aims to meet a growing need in Irish society for schools that recognise the developing diversity of Irish life and the modern need for democratic management structures. In particular, Educate Together guarantees children and parents of all faiths and none equal respect in the operation and governing of education.

The schools operated by the member associations of Educate Together are fully recognised by the Irish Department of Education and Science and work under the same regulations and funding structures as other national schools. However, they have a distinct ethos or governing spirit. This has been defined in the following terms:

- **Multi-denominational** i.e. all children having equal rights of access to the school, and children of all social, cultural and religious backgrounds being equally respected
- **Co-educational** and committed to encouraging all children to explore their full range of abilities and opportunities,
- **Child centred** in their approach to education
- **Democratically run** with active participation by parents in the daily life of the school, whilst positively affirming the professional role of the teachers (*Source: Educate Together Charter*)

Whilst the concepts of child-centredness and co-educationalism are now widely accepted in Irish primary education, what distinguishes the Educate Together schools is their hard work in developing a culturally inclusive and democratic ethos. This has pioneered unique approaches to inclusion of minority opinions and faiths in the Irish context.

The schools have developed education programmes which open the eyes of children to the naturally positive contribution that social, religious and cultural diversity and difference of viewpoint and opinion make to society.

The other characteristic feature of these schools is that they are democratically organised and governed. This maximises the potential for building a genuine partnership between the professional, objective role of the teacher and the necessarily personal involvement of the parent in contributing to their children's education.

*Information taken from the Educate Together website [www.educatetogether.ie](http://www.educatetogether.ie)*

Carrigaline Educate Together N.S. makes the distinction between denominational education and moral/religious education. The ethical curriculum followed by the school is called the Learn Together Curriculum. It is comprised of four strands: *Morality & Spirituality, Equality & Justice, Belief systems, Ethics & the environment.*

Denominational instruction will be facilitated by the school insofar as groups will be permitted to use the school premises. This is organised by parents outside of school hours.

## **Aims**

The aims and objectives of the policy can be summarised as follows:

- Outline the methods for the prevention and management of actual and potential aggression
- Explain the training which will be provided to all staff
- Outline the key aspects of The Crisis Development Model<sup>SM</sup>
- Outline the structure of the In-School Critical Incident Management Team and the process for dealing with actual and potential aggression

## Overview

Our pupils may display problem behaviours, which may take the form of aggression and/or violence. The school acknowledges its responsibility to ensure in so far as possible the safety and welfare of all pupils, staff and visitors.

The management of potential aggression or violence focuses on three broad areas;

- Prevention
- Management
- Review

## Prevention of Aggression and/or Violence

Pupils should be viewed as individuals and should at all times be treated with dignity and respect. Prevention strategies should encompass both environmental and personal factors.

Challenging behaviour can result for many reasons including the following:

### Environmental Factors

- Overcrowding – children need their own defined space, where possible.
- Inflexibility – both on the part of the child and other children.
- Inconsistency and unpredictability
- Activities which do not reflect the pupil's interests and abilities.
- Events – certain children cannot be present due to inability to cope with crowds, noise, movement, etc.

### Personal Conditions

- Medical Problems
- Psychological Problems
- Social Problems
- Communication Related Difficulties
- Sensory Needs
- Interpersonal Difficulties

*The above are not exhaustive lists, some behaviours may result due to other factors or conditions not listed above.*

CETNS endeavours at all times to promote a positive and proactive approach when dealing with problematic behaviours.

This approach encompasses the following:

- **Assessment:** Interdisciplinary assessment to understand the cause/function and meaning of the presenting behaviour. This will include the pupil and the family.
- **Goal setting:** Looking at the person and his/her lifestyle holistically and collaboratively, setting future goals.
- **Intervention:** Interdisciplinary intervention programmes
- Subsequent **evaluation.**

***This approach applies to all pupils.***

## **Staff Training**

An essential feature of all preventative measures is the quality of information and training available to staff. To this end staff training will be provided to help staff deal with the prevention and management of challenges in behaviours. Staff training programmes will be conducted on an on-going, annual basis and are continuously reviewed in accordance with current best practice. Currently Management of Actual and Potential Aggression Training (MAPA Training) is offered to all members of staff by a trained trainer employed in the school. MAPA has been created by the Crisis Prevention Institute (CPI) and is designed to enhance people's understanding and management of disruptive, aggressive, and/or violent behaviour. MAPA has been delivered to a wide range of professional staff within the health, education, and social care environments since 1992, and aims to ensure that everyone involved in crisis situations which include disruptive, challenging, or violent behaviour can maintain the Care, Welfare, Safety and Security of all involved. The programme is developed in a legal and professional framework consistent with current national standards, policies and guidance, current research, as well as recognised best practices. Training will be guided by the following;

- Care – showing compassion
- Welfare – supporting emotional and physical well-being
- Security – ensuring harmony, not harm
- Safety – prevention

As a general rule there are two ways in which a person will vent his/her frustration – Verbally or Physically. This is one of the essential tenets of understanding challenging behaviour. The following 4 behavioural patterns can be seen in most people who are escalating towards a challenging episode. The purpose of defining these 4 Levels is to endeavor to meet each level with an appropriate staff response and thus provide the best possible care, welfare, safety and security for pupil and staff.

## **The Crisis Development Model<sup>SM</sup>**

### *Level 1 – Anxiety*

One of the first behaviours one will observe in the Crisis Development Model is The Anxiety Level. Anxiety behaviour can be defined as “A noticeable increase or change in behaviour” e.g. pacing, tapping, questioning, self-injurious behaviours. Staff should approach this level with a Supportive response. A Supportive response is characterised as an empathic, non-judgemental approach attempting to alleviate anxiety.

### *Level 2 – Defensive*

The Defensive Level signifies the beginning stages of loss of rationality. The pupil may begin to shout, swear or engage in self-injurious behaviour. The staff approach at this level is to be directive. A Directive approach is an approach in which a staff member actively manages a potentially escalating situation. At this stage staff can attempt to de-escalate a situation by stating what you want or need the child to do in order to try and redirect the child to a more positive activity, setting behavioural limits, delivering instruction using simple language, and informing the child of the positive consequence of following the instructions given. Staff should ensure that their tone is calm and that they are adopting the Supportive Stance<sup>SM</sup>. The Supportive Stance<sup>SM</sup> is how staff members position their body in relation to others. The Supportive Stance is made of 3 elements, Position, Posture and Proximity. We use the Supportive Stance<sup>SM</sup> as it communicates respect to those who staff work with, it is non-threatening and it maintains personal safety. This position also aids staff to manage their non-verbal behaviour and helps to de-escalate and/or prevent challenging behaviour.

### *Level 3 – Risk Behaviour*

Risk Behaviour is characterised as the total loss of control, which often results in a behaviour that presents a risk to self and/or others, e.g. self-injurious, hitting, kicking, spitting, threatening. The

recommended approach for this level is Physical Intervention. Physical Intervention is the use of disengagement and/or holding skills to manage risk behaviour and minimise harm. The use of Physical Intervention is only as a last resort where the risk of not intervening is higher than the risk of intervening.

Staff who have completed the 2 Day MAPA course are the only people who are qualified to employ holding techniques at this stage. Physical Intervention may be necessary when all less restrictive means, e.g. talking, reassuring, etc., have failed. It should only be used if it is considered to be absolutely necessary and in the pupil's interest.

The criteria for the use of Holding Skills are as follows;

1. To prevent serious self-injury
2. To prevent injury to other children and/or staff
3. To prevent damage to and/or destruction of property

*Physical Intervention should always be considered as the last resort.*

In such circumstances a staff member should seek assistance immediately and other children should be removed safely from the setting. Staff have a duty to preserve the safety and wellbeing of pupils and each other so should offer assistance where and whenever necessary. A Team Leader must take control of the situation. A Team Leader may be a member of staff who was there first, has a good relationship with the child or who is competent and confident in dealing with the situation. Staff should communicate with the child only in a calm and deliberate manner in an attempt to calm the child.

Staff must always use methods of holding which are reasonable, least restrictive and proportionate to the level of risk behaviour. Staff must always be aware of the risks involved in using a physical intervention.

#### *Level 4 – Tension Reduction*

Tension Reduction is a decrease in physical and emotional energy characterised by the regaining of rationality, e.g. withdrawing, sleeping, crying, etc. The child who is experiencing tension reduction has been through a frightening and upsetting experience, some or all of which he/she may not remember. When a child enters Tension Reduction he/she may be very vulnerable emotionally. Staff should remember that the act of escalation may be more frightening to the child than it is to the staff. The appropriate response is Therapeutic Rapport which is an approach to maintain or re-establish communication with an individual. Staff should continue to communicate with the child in a supportive and empathic manner. The dignity of the child should be restored as quickly as possible as remorse is common. It is essential that tension reduction be conducted in a quiet environment.

#### **Post-Crisis**

The COPING Model<sup>SM</sup> should be used after any incident where Risk Behaviour has occurred. The model should be used even if no physical intervention has been used. The model is as follows;

- C** – ensure that emotional and physical control has been regained
- O** – orient yourself to the basic facts both from the child's point of view and the staff's
- P** – look for patterns or triggers for the behaviour and patterns in staff responses
- I** – investigate alternatives to the behaviour and ways to strengthen staff responses
- N** – negotiate future approaches, expectation and behaviour with the child and changes that will improve future interventions
- G** – give control back, provide support and encouragement

If a physical intervention has been used there must be a debrief with everyone involved.

## **Incident Report Format**

An incident is any out of the ordinary occurrence that results in injury, verbal abuse, property loss or damage, use of physical force or restraint involving any of the school community. After any incident an Incident Report must be completed (*Appendix I*).

Staff should evaluate his/her response to the incident in discussion with a member of the middle management team or the CPI trained MAPA trainer. This will enable the member involved to understand the incident and look constructively at ways of preventing and dealing with such incidents.

The report provides a detailed account of an incident so appropriate follow up action can be taken. This can include both positive and negative consequences. The report can be a reliable tool for administrative evaluation of policies, procedures, performance and patterns.

The report can improve the efficiency and safety of staff by educating them about potential dangers and how they might be prevented.

## **Management of Critical Incident in School**

### *In-School Critical Incident Management Team*

Mel Thornton – Principal

Christine O’ Brien – Deputy Principal

Grace O’ Connor – Post Holder

Deirdre O’ Hagan – Post Holder

Rory Ward – Post Holder

Frank Healy – Post Holder

Brid Stack – MAPA Trainer

### *In-School Care Team*

Mel Thornton – Principal, Designated Liaison Person

Christine O’ Brien – Deputy Principal, Designated Liaison Person

### *Steps*

1. a) Class teacher makes an internal classroom arrangement to de-escalate the situation  
b) If SNA, resource teacher or any visiting teacher or other professional is supervising group and a child becomes physically or verbally aggressive they call the nearest in-school manager to take over situation
2. After an acceptable time frame, the teacher makes judgement to try to remove other children from the setting to the corridor or another classroom where they will be supervised by another teacher and/or SNAs. The teacher will give the child space and observe from a safe distance. The teacher should not interact with the child at this stage.
3. Class teacher briefs in-school management and manager then makes call to either
  - Allow time to be given for child to de-escalate the behaviour
  - To contact parents/guardians
  - To contact outside agency or ambulance on 112/999
4. If child leaves the building the parents/guardians and the Gardaí are to be called straightaway on (021) 491 9370
5. If child becomes physically aggressive towards another child or a staff member
  - Ask child to stop in a calm voice
  - Attempt to stay out of child’s immediate range
  - As a last resort only use MAPA holding skills with at least 2 adults present who have completed the appropriate training
  - If it is appropriate the team leader can try and talk calmly to the child while he/she is calming down or being held



6. After the incident has been dealt with in-school management team meet to decide further consequences and/or actions
7. Staff involved will fill out the Incident Report Form
8. All members of staff and children involved will engage in a debriefing after any incident.
9. In the case of physical aggression, the Code of Behaviour will be consulted. The principal, along with members of the Critical Management Incident Team will meet to decide the severity of physical aggression and the appropriate response also.

## **Success Criteria**

Our Safeguarding Children Safeguarding Staff Policy will be seen to be working well when we receive positive feedback from pupils, parents and teachers. Success can also be based on positive observations of behaviour within the school building, outside play time and at dismissal time. In the event of a physical intervention being used, when procedures are followed and the case has a successful outcome, it will also be considered successful.

## **Roles and Responsibility**

Members of the policy committee have formulated this policy. All members of the school community have both a role and responsibility in implementing this policy, in particular the Board of Management, Principal, teachers and SNAs. The training aspects involved in this policy will be monitored and evaluated on an ongoing basis by the MAPA trainer through updating the training provided to staff every two years and refreshing staff on aspects of the training during staff meetings.

## **Implementation Date**

This policy is to be implemented in May 2016

## **Timetable for Review**

This policy is to be reviewed during the school year 2017/2018

## **Ratification and Communication**

The policy will be communicated to members of the Board of Management prior to the meeting of the BOM on \_\_\_\_\_. Parents will be made aware in the next school communication that the policy is available for viewing by appointment in the school.

*Date of ratification:* \_\_\_\_\_

*Signed:* \_\_\_\_\_  
CHAIRPERSON OF BOM

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

*Appendix 1*

**Report on Incidents in the school environment (For School's Internal Records)**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Class: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Accident: \_\_\_\_\_ Time of accident: \_\_\_\_\_

Location of Accident:  
\_\_\_\_\_

Staff on supervision duties at time of accident:  
\_\_\_\_\_

Information regarding circumstances of accident:  
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Witness 1 \_\_\_\_\_ Witness 2 \_\_\_\_\_

Any further information:  
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Action Taken:  
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\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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

*(NOTE: By law, the Health & Safety Authority must be notified when an accident causes death or prevents an employed person from working for more than 3 days. This is explained in detail in the CPSMA Handbook and is accompanied by a standard reporting form. The school's insurance company should also be notified about serious accidents that occur in the school or while on school related activities.)*