

St. Joseph's Patrician College, Galway.

'THE BISH'



One to One Engagement Policy

Ratification Date:

Revision Number	Date:	Approved by BOM
1	June 8 th 2023	June 8 th 2023
2		
3		

Next Review Date: June 2026

This procedure is in keeping with the Child Protection Procedures as adopted by the Board of Management. Teachers are reminded that they are mandated persons and must be familiar with their obligations with reference to the Children First: National Guidance for Protection and Welfare of Children 2017 and the Children First Act 2015

Table of Contents

Section	Description	Page
	Table of contents	2
	List of Common Acronyms used in document	3
1	Type of School	4
2	Board of Management.	4
3	Rationale.	4-5
4	Specified operational directions for Guidance Counsellors	6
4.1	General Considerations.	6
4.2	Responsibilities and Duties of the Guidance Counsellor	7
5	Specified Operational Procedures for Staff Authorised to transact one to one engagement.	7
5.1	General Considerations.	7
5.2	Authorised Staff Members to Engage in One-One Sessions	8
5.3	One-to-One Meeting/Teaching with Students	8
5.4	Responsibilities and duties of teachers	9
6	Implementation.	10
6.1	Roles and Responsibilities	10
7	Review and Ratification.	10-11
8	Appendix	12-15

	List of Common Acronyms used in document
SLT	Senior leadership Team (Principal and Deputy Principals)
IGC	Institute of Guidance Counsellors
Tusla	National Child and Family Agency
AEN	Additional Educational Needs
DLP	Designated liaison person
DDLDP	Deputy designated liaison person
NCSE	National Council for Special Education
NEPS	National Educational Psychological Service
SEC	State Examination Commission
BOM	Board of Management
ITE	Initial Teacher Educator: Initial teacher education programmes for post-primary teachers are facilitated through a range of concurrent (undergraduate) and consecutive (postgraduate) programmes., including PME/ITE (See below)
ST/PME/ITE	Student Teachers doing The Professional Master of Education (ST/PME/ITE) which is a full-time teacher education programme designed for those who wish to become a post primary teacher

1.0: Type of School.

St. Joseph's Patrician College is an all-boys Catholic voluntary secondary school under the patronage of the Le Chéile Schools Trust. We are an inclusive school both in our intake and in the curriculum which we provide.

We aim to provide the highest standard of education for all our students. We endeavour to fulfil our mission in partnership with parents/guardians, staff, students, trustees and the local community.

2.0: Board of Management.

This policy was devised in consultation with all the teaching staff in our school. It was submitted to the Board of Management, Parents' Association and the Students' Council. It is being established as part of the School Development Planning Process.

It is the policy of St. Joseph's Patrician College that one-to – one counselling and teaching may often be in the best interest of the student.

Provided it is deemed appropriate for an individual, one-to-one teaching may be provided. It is our preference to use small groups as this alleviates any potential child protection issues.

3.0: Rationale:

The Board of Management recognises that child protection and welfare considerations permeate all aspects of college life and must be reflected in each college policy, college practices and activities. The Board of Management also reaffirms its primary responsibility for the care and welfare of learners and staff.

As such the Board of Management will fully implement, without modification the Department of Education and Skills Child Protection

Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools 2017. These procedures will therefore underpin the content of this policy.

To these ends, the policy takes account of the provisions of each of the following important pieces of legislation:

1. Freedom of Information Act 2014.
2. The Education Act 1998.
3. The Child Welfare Act 2000
4. Children First – National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017.
5. The Children First Act 2015.
6. General Data Protection Regulation of 2016 (GDPR)

This policy was developed following the Board of Management's identified need for clear direction in relation to one-to-one engagement by the following staff categories and students. Those categories include:

- Teachers
- Special Needs Assistants
- Secretaries
- Caretakers
- Cleaners
- SLT Members
- Guidance Counsellors.

4.0: Specified operational directions for Guidance Counsellors

4.1: General Consideration.

The guidance counsellor is a fully qualified Guidance Counsellor, a member of the Teaching Council and Garda vetted.

Both Guidance Counsellors are active members of the Institute of Guidance Counsellors (IGC), regularly engage with CPD and attend counselling supervision.as per IGC recommendations.

- The guidance counsellors are fully qualified guidance counsellors, members of the Teaching Council and Garda Vetted.
- The counsellors record a list of students detailing who they met on a one-to-one basis and relevant notes regarding the sessions.
- All one-to-one meetings with students take place in the counselling/guidance office or other appropriate room.
- As a mandated person, under the legislation Counsellors and teachers are required to report any knowledge, belief or reasonable suspicion that a child has been harmed, is being harmed, or is at risk of being harmed. The Act defines harm as assault, ill-treatment, neglect or sexual abuse, and covers single and multiple instances.

They have to:

- To report harm of children, above a certain threshold to Tusla
- To assist Tusla, if requested, in assessing a concern which has been the subject of a mandated report
- The Counsellor will have sensible regard for the student's beliefs and values. They will work in ways to promote the students' personal autonomy, freedom of choice and self-direction.
- All one-to-one meetings with students take place in the Counselling/Guidance office or classroom with glass windows
- Any concerns (Child Protection) that the Counsellor has regarding the safety of a student is discussed with the Principal (DLP) as a matter of urgency. If the Principal is unavailable, the issue will be discussed with the Deputy Principal (DDLp).

4.2: Responsibilities and Duties of the Guidance Counsellor

Students may be referred to the Guidance Counsellor by the Pastoral Care Student Support Team, Year Head, AEN team, teacher, parent or other student or they can self-refer. In the sessions the Counsellor should always be mindful of:

- Their role and the boundaries within the Counsellor/student relationship
- Their qualifications, areas of expertise, relevant limitations, the nature of counselling activities involved and the reasons for undertaking them and the benefits to the student in the case of counselling
- Any referral options which the guidance counsellor feels may benefit the student due to the nature of the issue presented.
- Confidentiality in the counselling process and the limits of confidentiality
- The students right to engage in and withdraw from involvement in the process at any stage.
- Keeping all sensitive written records in a locked filing cabinet in the Guidance Counsellor's office. When making or keeping records, care should be taken to distinguish between fact, observation and opinion and, to include only such information as is required for the purpose of professional involvement with the student. Where a decision is made, the basis for the decision is noted. Statutory and data protection responsibility with regard to records applies to all media, whether written hardcopy, electronic or digitally recorded.

It is also very important to note the valuable 'career guidance' role they play to support a student in making choices and plans for post-secondary education.

5. Specified Operational Procedures for Staff Authorised to transact one to one engagement.

5.1: General Considerations.

All one-to-one interactions with students must take place in an open environment. Every effort should be made to ensure the protection of

children and staff. Where one-to one session occur, this will take place in an open environment i.e. staff member or pupil visible through a glass panelled, unlocked door.

5.2: Authorised Staff Members to Engage in One-One Sessions

- SLT member.
- Guidance Counsellor.
- Certified First Aid Responder in emergency situations
- AEN Team member
- One to one teaching may occur between students and Special Education teachers.
- Work carried out by Special Needs Assistants (SNA) may also occur.
- Class Tutor.
- Teachers.
- PME/ITE.
- DLP/ DDLP.

5.3: One-to-One Meeting/Teaching with Students

- General
- All one-to-one meetings with students take place in an open environment with a glass paneled door. Otherwise the door of the room in which they are working should be left open for the duration. Any blinds etc., on the glass panel on the door, should be opened for the duration also.
- Only staff members (including ST/PME/ITE/ITE) should engage in 1:1 activity.
- One to one teaching may occur between students and teachers.
- Work carried out by Special Needs Assistants will also be completed in an open environment under the direction of a class teacher. From time to time outside professionals may be required to meet with/assess students in a one to one setting.
- This includes visits from external agencies for example, NCSE, NEPS, SEC, TUSLA etc. All personnel working with children on a one-to-one basis must be Garda Vetted.

5.4: Responsibilities and Duties of Teachers.

- Teachers have a responsibility to inform students of the extent and limitations of confidentiality with respect to the school's policies and safe guarding of the wellbeing of the student.
- Teachers should be aware of their legal responsibilities / obligations as a mandated person under the Children First Act 2015 and The Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017”?
- Students should be informed of the limits of confidentiality where information about them may need to be shared.
- If issues of safety override those of confidentiality and a concern around child protection arises the concern will be discussed with the DLP as a matter of urgency.
- DLP/Principal will inform parents of any child protection related issues in line with Child Protection procedures.
- The above procedures will be reviewed along with the child protection procedures each year. Every effort should be made to ensure the protection of students and staff. It is crucial that clear boundaries are put in place and most one to one teaching will take place in a classroom with a window and the where the door will be open.
- Staff members will not detain a student alone in a classroom or in an area of the school where they may not be visible to others.
- If a teacher decides that an extra class for pupils or 1:1 may be required for catch up, the SLT must be informed in advance.
- Formal extra classes that are in groups or 1:1 must receive permission, in advance, from the Board of Management and adhere to the responsibilities and duties as set out in this policy and in the **After School Classes / Activity Procedure** as approved by the Board of Management.

6.0 Implementation.

6.1: Roles and Responsibilities:


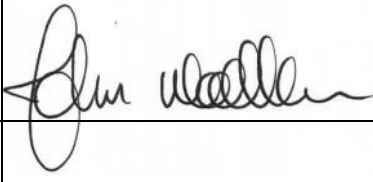
- The Principal and the Deputy Principal (overseen by the BOM) are responsible for overseeing and supporting the implementation of this Policy.
- All staff have a responsibility to follow through on the guidelines within the policy.
- It is the responsibility of the class teacher/ AEN teacher/ guidance counsellor / ST/PME/ITE to oversee the implementation of this policy within their own individual classroom.

7.0: Review and Ratification

The attention of all staff will be drawn to this whole-school policy upon their appointment to the school by the Principal.

This policy will be published on the school website and a copy of this policy will be made available to the Department of Education and the Patron, if requested.

As with the majority of school policies this One-to-One Engagement Policy will be reviewed on a three-yearly cycle. However, the Board of Management will review the policy on a shorter interval in the event of significant legislative changes or significant incidents that warrant an immediate policy review.

The Board of Management ratified this policy on the:	DATE: June 8th 2023
	Signed:
Kieran Kavanagh Chairperson	
John Madden Secretary of the BOM	
Date of next review: As Required and before June 2026	

Appendix 1:

List of applicable legislations listed on Page 5

Freedom of Information act 2014:

<https://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2014/act/30/enacted/en/html>

The Education Act 1998.

Bill entitled an Act to make provision in the interests of the common good for the education of every child in the State, including any child with special educational needs, and to provide generally for primary, post-primary, adult and continuing education and vocational education and training; to ensure that the education system is accountable to students, their parents and the State for the education provided, respects the diversity of values, beliefs and traditions in Irish society and is conducted in a spirit of partnership between schools, patrons, students, parents, teachers and other school staff and the State; to provide for the recognition and funding of schools and their management through boards of management; to provide for an Inspectorate of schools, to provide for the role and responsibilities of Principals and teachers; to establish the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment and to make provision for it, and to provide for related matters

<https://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/1998/act/51/enacted/en/html>

The Child Welfare Act 2000:

The legislation governing school attendance in Ireland is the Education Welfare Act 2000. Under this Act, the minimum school leaving age is 16 years or until students have completed 3 years of second-level education.

Parents must ensure that their children from age 6 to 16 attend a school or receive a certain minimum education. There is no absolute legal obligation on children to attend school nor on their parents to send them to school.

Irish Constitution recognizes the family as the primary educator of the child. It guarantees to respect the right and duty of parents to provide for the religious, moral, intellectual, physical, and social education of their

children. Parents are free to provide education in their homes or schools established by the state.

Aims Of Education Welfare Act, 2000 (Ireland)

- Education Welfare Act, 2000 provides a comprehensive national framework for the promotion and registration of school attendance.
- To make legislative provisions where there are serious difficulties.
- It makes the school leaving age 16 years.
- It is to attend to the education welfare of all 16 to 18 years old who have left formal schooling.
- Ensures that those children who are educated outside the recognized school structure are receiving an adequate education.

The Children First Act 2015.

The [Children First Act 2015](#) was enacted on 19th November 2015 and commenced in full on December 11th 2017.

The Act places a number of statutory obligations on specific groups of professionals and on particular organisations providing services to children.

Through the provisions of the Act, it is intended to:

- Raise awareness of child abuse and neglect
- Provide for mandatory reporting by key professionals
- Improve child safeguarding arrangements in organisations providing services to children
- Provide for cooperation and information-sharing between agencies when Tusla – Child and Family Agency, is undertaking child protection

The legislation also contains a provision that removes the defence of reasonable chastisement in relation to corporal punishment as part of court proceedings.

The policy intent is that the legislation will operate side-by-side with the existing non-statutory obligations provided for in Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children (2017).

The Criminal Justice (Withholding of Information on Offences against Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act, 2012 and the National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Acts, 2012 - 2016 are additional key pieces of co

<https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/bills/bill/2014/30/>

Children First – National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017.

Children First, National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children was launched on October 2nd 2017. This Guidance is a primary reference for all citizens to report concerns and includes the new legislative obligations. It provides clarity between the legislation and the existing non-statutory obligations which will continue to operate for all sectors of society.

Children First Guidance describes the four main types of abuse and sets out the steps which should be taken to ensure that the child or young person is protected from harm. It has been updated to include new information about the Children First Act 2015 and it includes specific information for the professionals and organisations that now have legal obligations to keep children safe. . In January 2019 the Children First Guidance was amended by way of an addendum to ensure that online safety is specifically accounted for in child safeguarding statements, as required under the Children First Act.

The Guidance also outlines the roles of the main statutory bodies involved in child welfare and protection: Tusla - Child and Family Agency, and An Garda Síochána. It contains details of how to report a concern about a child and what happens once the report is received by Tusla.

Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017

The purpose of the procedures is to give clear direction and guidance to school authorities and to school personnel in relation to meeting the statutory obligations under the Children First Act, 2015 and in the continued implementation within the school setting of the best practice guidance set out in the updated Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017.

[gov.ie](http://www.gov.ie) - [Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017 \(www.gov.ie\)](http://www.gov.ie)

General Data Protection Regulation of 2016 (GDPR)

The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) applies from 25 May 2018. It has general application to the processing of personal data in the EU, setting out more extensive obligations on data controllers and processors, and providing strengthened protections for data subjects. Although the GDPR is directly applicable as a law in all Member States, it allows for certain issues to be given further effect in national law. In Ireland, the national law, which, amongst other things, gives further effect to the GDPR, is the **Data Protection Act 2018**.

<https://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2018/act/7/enacted/en/html>