



BLESSINGTON EDUCATE TOGETHER NATIONAL SCHOOL

20th May 2019

Dear Parents & Guardians,

In recent years, as a society, we have become very aware of the problem of child abuse through neglect, emotional, physical or sexual abuse. The staff, and myself, have attended training and a number of seminars related to child protection. The following gives a brief overview of our responsibilities and obligations in relation to child safeguarding. This forms part of a review I have undertaken as a new principal. BETNS will review child protection annually each September.

Each one of us has a duty to protect children and *Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children* (2017) notes that teachers, who are the main caregivers to children outside of 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* (2017) 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 Blessington Educate Together 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 to the matter to Children and Family Service of the HSE (Tusla).**

Tusla 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 Jonathan Kinsella. The Deputy Designated Liaison Person is Lynn Steed.

Children First: National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of children may be accessed on the website of the Department of Children and Youth Affairs (www.dcy.a.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 and Guardians are also welcome to look through the procedures and Child Protection Policy here at the school and on our website.

If you have any queries or questions please don't hesitate to get in touch with me via the office.

Yours sincerely,
Jonathan Kinsella.