



### Child Protection

The Child Care Act was passed into law in 1991. It was designed to promote the welfare and protection of children (0 – 18 yrs.). This Act covers the rights and responsibilities of parents, the protection of children in emergencies, children in care, the supervision of pre-schools and the duty of the HSE to promote the welfare of children who are not receiving adequate care and protection.

The Act states that, in all situations, the safety and protection of the child, is of paramount importance.

'Children First' the national guidelines for the protection and welfare of children was published by the Dept. of Health & Children in 1999.

Children First offers four definitions of abuse under the following headings:

- Neglect can be defined in terms of an omission, where a child suffers significant harm or impairment of development by being deprived of food, clothing, warmth, hygiene, intellectual stimulation, supervision and safety, attachment to and affection from adults, medical care.
- Emotional abuse occurs when a child's needs for affection, approval, consistency and security are not met.
- Physical abuse is any form of non-accidental injury, or injury which results from wilful or neglectful failure to protect a child.
- Sexual abuse occurs when a child is used by another person for his/her gratification or sexual arousal or for that of others.

### Child Protection Guidelines for Post Primary Schools

These guidelines oblige the Board of Management of each school to designate a senior member of staff, usually, the school Principal, to act as the Designated Liaison Person (D.L.P.) for the school. The D.L.P. liaises with external agencies, such as the HSE, which deals with cases of child abuse. The D.L.P. also supports staff members who may have concerns about child protection and safety.

School authorities and all school personnel are required to follow procedures outlined in these guidelines when dealing with allegations or suspicions of abuse.

These guidelines are available on the website of the Dept. of Education and Skills.

[www.education.ie](http://www.education.ie).

Our school offers a Care Structure for all students through the Pastoral Care System. This comprises of the Care Team, the composition of which is outlined at end of this article.

The Care Team is privileged to operate with a unique code of confidentiality, which is respected by the school community. This allows the team to offer Pastoral Care in a sensitive way. Special support is given to students experiencing any difficulties or challenges.



Scoil phobail Beal Achá h-Ambhnaís

## BALLYHAUNIS COMMUNITY SCHOOL

David McDonagh *Principal*

Concepta Moran *Deputy Principal*

The school also operates a structure of Class Tutors and Year Heads.

Through the SPHE Programme, students are supported in their personal development. As well as the timetabled class each week, the school supports extra SPHE Days/Modules.

The school provides bereavement/separation support on a one to one basis and also through group support and the Rainbows Support Programme.

In Ballyhaunis Community School we aim to promote a spirit of concern for others within and beyond the school community. In order that all students receive the care and support they need, it is very important that family or friends inform the school immediately if a student is sick at home/hospital, if they have been bereaved of if a student is having difficulties.

Students who are experiencing difficulties or problems of any kind should ask to speak to a member of the school Care Team of their choice who will direct them to the most appropriate person/agency if they themselves do not feel adequately qualified/informed to deal with the problem(s). Likewise friends and classmates of students are encouraged to consult with a member of the Care Team of the school if they feel that another student is engaging in potentially dangerous/harmful activities or is troubled in any way – often times students are reluctant to confide in adults. Such situations will be handled discreetly by the school; the safety and welfare of students is one of the most important elements of school life.

The Care Team is comprised of:

Mr David McDonagh	Principal
Ms Moran	Deputy Principal
Ms A.M. O'Reilly	Guidance Counsellor
Ms Macken	Chaplain
Ms Hayes	Learning Support Co-ordinator
Ms Levins-Lyons	International & Traveller Student Co-ordinator

### Contact Numbers

Principal	094 9630247
Deputy Principal	094 9630700
Guidance Counsellor	094 9630849
Chaplain	094 9630235/9630238
School Office	094 9630235/9630238
Childline	1800 666666
Samaritans	1850 609090
Emergency Services	999 or 112