



Scoil Mhuire Stay Safe Policy

The 'Stay Safe' Programme is a personal safety skills programme for Primary Schools.

The aim of the Stay Safe programme is:

- To reduce vulnerability to child abuse and bullying through the provision of personal safety education for children and training for teachers, school management boards and parents.
- To develop the children's ability to recognise, resist and report risk situations or abusive encounters.
- As well as reducing children's vulnerability to abuse, the Stay Safe programme aims to increase wellbeing and resilience by giving children knowledge, skills and strategies in an age-appropriate manner, using developmentally structured lessons and resources to empower them.

All primary schools are required to fully implement the Stay Safe programme (DES circular 65/ 2011) within the context of the Social, Personal and Health Education curriculum. The role of schools in prevention education is increasingly being recognised as imperative to the reduction of vulnerabilities of children to abuse.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- Scoil Mhuire SPHE Policy
- Scoil Mhuire RSE Policy
- Scoil Mhuire Wellbeing Policy
- Child Safeguarding Statement for Scoil Mhuire
- Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools 2107
- Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017 (and the addendum 2109)

Teaching the Stay Safe Programme

- The Stay Safe programme is based on the following core elements:
 - Nurturing children's self esteem
 - Building children's confidence
 - Enabling children to be assertive
 - Helping children to identify and express their feelings
- The Stay Safe rules are:
 - Say No, Get away and Tell
 - Never keep secrets about touch
 - Never go anywhere with or take anything from a stranger
- In Scoil Mhuire, the programme is taught in Junior Infants, 1st class, 3rd class and 5th class and is revised the following year in Senior Infants, 2nd, 4th and 6th classes.
- The lesson plans are divided into 5 Stay Safe Topics:
 1. Feeling Safe and Unsafe
 2. Friendship and Bullying

3. Touches
4. Secrets and Telling
5. Strangers

- Teachers must teach the topics consecutively beginning with Topic 1 and working through to Topic 5
- The lessons in the Stay Safe programme are spiral in nature where similar content is revisited at each level but the processes, approaches and information adopted are designed to reflect the needs of the children at a particular time and at their various stages of readiness. The table below outlines the number of lessons at each level and in each topic

Stay Safe Topic	Number of Lessons			
	J. Infants S. Infants	1 st and 2 nd	3 rd and 4 th	5 th and 6 th
Feeling Safe and Unsafe	3	3	3	3
Friendship and Bullying	3	5	6	6
Touches	2	2	2	2
Secrets and Telling	1	1	1	1
Strangers	1	1	1	1

Parental Involvement

Co-operation between parent(s) and teachers is essential to the success of the programme.

- The parent/guardian guide to the Stay Safe Programme is available on the school website www.office@scoilmuireleixlip.com or on www.staysafe.ie
- Parent(s) /guardian(s) will be informed that the Stay Safe Programme will be taught in the school (Appendix A)
- Parent(s) /guardian(s) are encouraged to contact the school if they have any queries or concerns about the programme.
- Parent(s) / Guardian(s) are asked to:
 - Familiarise themselves with the programme via the school website or by accessing www.staysafe.ie
 - Discuss worksheets relating to the programme with the child
 - Sign worksheets which the child has completed
 - Discuss personal safety issues with the child
 - Explain safety rules that exist in the family
- The Stay Safe programme is part of the SPHE curriculum which all schools must implement. However parent(s) / guardian(s) have the right to remove their child from any of the sensitive aspects of the SPHE programme, including Stay Safe, if they wish.
- In the event that a parent / guardian wish to withdraw the child from participation in the programme, this must be put in writing with the reasons for doing so. A record of the child's removal from the programme will be kept on file.

Resources for teaching the Stay Safe Programme

- Each teacher is supplied with the Stay Safe manual for the relevant class level
- Teachers are directed to the following websites www.staysafe.ie and www.pdst.ie/staysafe
- There is a wide variety of SPHE resources in the school library and in the teachers' resource boxes.
- There is a Wellbeing Trolley in the school full of wellbeing books.
- For information on Integration across the Curriculum: see pages 14 – 15 of the Stay Safe Manual.

Assessment

The real impact of the learning in Stay Safe and SPHE may not take place until long after the child has left primary school. The achievement of many of the objectives of the programme will be dependent on the emotional, intellectual and social maturity of the child.

The following assessment methods can be used across the programme

- Teacher observation
- Conferencing
- Questioning
- Teacher designed tasks
- Self assessment

Possibility of Disclosure

Since the underlying message of the Stay Safe programme is that children can and should tell an adult if they have a problem, it is possible that a child in the class may be prompted to confide in the teacher. Teachers should be familiar with Department of Education procedures on responding appropriately to suspicions or disclosures of child abuse.

All schools are required to formally adopt and implement, without modification, the Department of Education and Skills (DES) Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools as part of their overall child protection policy.

All school personnel must act in accordance with the 2011 DES child protection procedures which state:

'If a member of staff receives an allegation or has a suspicion that a child may have been abused or neglected, or is being abused or neglected, or is at risk of abuse or neglect, he/she shall, without delay, report the matter to the DLP in that school' (DES Procedures 4.1 p.23)

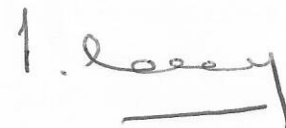
This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on 30th November 2021.

Signature of Chairperson



Date

30/11/21



Signature of Principal



Date

30/11/21



Scoil Mhuire

**Green Lane, Leixlip, Co. Kildare, 016244851,
office@scoilmhuireleixlip.com scoilmhuireleixlip.net**

(Date)

Dear Parent(s)/Guardian(s),

We are planning to teach Stay Safe; a personal safety education programme over the next few weeks. The aim of the Stay Safe programme is to teach children personal safety skills so they can look after themselves in situations which could be upsetting or dangerous. It deals initially with common situations for example getting lost or being bullied. The programme also teaches children the safety skills necessary to protect themselves from physical or sexual abuse and emphasises the importance of telling a trusted adult about any problems they have.

The Stay Safe programme is part of the Social, Personal and Health Education curriculum which all primary schools are required to implement. Co-operation between parents and teachers is essential to the success of this programme. It is important that parents are aware of the content of the Stay Safe lessons and are able to discuss the lessons with their children. Your child may bring home worksheets which will inform you on the topics being covered in class and how you can reinforce the messages at home.

You can familiarise yourself with the content of the Stay Safe lessons at www.staysafe.ie/teachers/resources.htm. Please contact the school if you wish to discuss the programme further.

Thank you for your co-operation,

Nora Mescal
Principal

Class Teacher