**CHILD PROTECTION PROCEDURES**

**School Protocols**

**Dressing Rooms/ Changing Areas/ Shower Areas**

Dressing Rooms/Changing Rooms and Shower Areas are for the sole purpose of students participating in sports activities. Students not participating in the sports activity at a given time do not enter these areas.

It is the intention of the school that all students should be afforded privacy whilst using these areas.

However, to ensure the wellbeing and safety of students the Board of Management authorises teachers/supervisors to enter these areas preceded by a vocal alert telling students that an adult is entering the area. The teacher/ adult supervisor will enter the area after a brief period to allow students dress themselves to a level of decency. This should be in the first instance by a female teacher. A male teacher/adult supervisor intervening in such a manner is required to be particularly prudent and can do so only in the case of an emergency.

In the case of all matches, the first teacher/adult supervisor into a dressing room must be a female teacher or female voluntary adult supervisor. She must also be the last adult supervisor to leave the dressing room. Once a female teacher or female voluntary adult supervisor has checked the dressing room and ensured that all students are dressed to a level of decency, a male teacher may enter the dressing room to give a team talk.

**Trips out of School**

The Principal will approve the supervision requirements in advance of all trips out of school. There must be at least one female teacher or female adult supervisor included on every trip.

Overnight stays:

* Sleeping accommodation should be shared by students of approximately the same age.
* Interventions by teachers in sleeping area/changing rooms should only take place in the manner set out above for dressing rooms.
* Teachers intervening in such situations must be appropriately clothed. Less than full clothing may be necessary in the case of an emergency.

Normal School Rules apply on all trips. Parents will be informed of any serious incident of misbehaviour or where there is concern for the wellbeing or safety of students.

**Matches**

There must be at least one female teacher/supervisor at all matches involving school teams.

**Searches**

A student may be asked to empty her pockets or the contents of her bag where there is a reasonable belief that the student is in possession of stolen goods, illegal substances, weapons or any inappropriate material. Reasonable belief might be established through an informant or by observation of an event or because someone is acting suspiciously.

Given the above where there is a need to search a student’s property the student will be invited to have present her parent or a teacher of her choice or a student of her choice. The search will be carried out in the presence of Principal or Deputy Principal with another teacher to act as witness to the event. In the absence of the Principal or Deputy Principal it will be carried out in the presence of a Year Head.

There should never be physical contact with the student or the student’s clothing nor should the student’s coat or jacket or school bag or gear bag be searched except with the express permission of the student. If a student refuses to turn out her pockets etc. she may be prompted to do so by her parents but, in circumstances where there is suspicion of a crime, the assistance of the Gardai will be sought.

Lockers:

Lockers are school property and management reserves the right to search lockers in circumstances such as when there is reasonable belief that the student is in possession of stolen goods, illegal substances, weapons or any inappropriate material.

When a locker is being searched it should take place in the presence of Principal or Deputy Principal as above and where possible, in the presence of the student to whom the locker has been assigned.

**One-to-one Situations**

Where teachers need to talk privately with an individual student, the teacher should be clearly visible to others at all times while the student can be afforded privacy.

Where this does happen e.g. learning support, special examination centres, tutor/year head interventions as above, the teacher must be visible at all times through an open door or a clear glass panel.

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.

**Cars**

A student will never be given a lift alone in a vehicle by a staff member in the course of their work. Where it is necessary to bring a student in a vehicle the staff member will be accompanied by another adult, one of which must be female, or two other students.

**First Aid**

It is recommended that first aid should be administered in the presence of other students or another adult. The staff member should seek help in the first instance, however, no member of the staff should hesitate to provide first aid in an emergency even if another person is not present.

**Emergency**

In cases of emergency, all teachers and voluntary adult supervisors are authorised by the Board of Management to take appropriate action based on the circumstances. Details of such emergency must be recorded in the Incident Book in the Principal’s Office.

**Photography**

The use of cameras or a camera on phones or any recording device is prohibited as per the School’s Code of Behaviour.

* Photographing and/or recording of staff by students without express permission is prohibited.
* Photographing and/or recording of students by students is prohibited unless with the permission of teachers and the agreement of the student being photographed and/or recorded.
* Photographing and/or recording of students who give consent by staff is allowed as part of curricular, co-curricular and extra-curricular activities.
* Teachers will handle and store all such photographs/recordings/digital files in a professional manner, as for all school data, and used for school purposes only.

**Cameras and/or recording devices of any sort must never be used in Toilets, Changing Areas or Sleeping Areas.**

Parental permission for use of student photos and videos will be sought on enrolment to the school.

**Communication**

Staff will ensure that any communication with pupils/students, colleagues, parents, school management and others is appropriate, including communication via electronic media, such as e-mail, texting and social network sites.

Texting students, particularly outside school hours should be avoided, unless it is absolutely necessary and for a stated school purpose.

Staff members must never have students as “friends” on social network sites.