



The Teresian School

12 Stillorgan Road, Dublin 4 Tel: (01) 2691376 Fax: (01) 2602878 email: secretary@teresian.ie

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1.1 Statement of Purpose and Function

The Teresian Pre-School aims to provide childcare and education to the highest standard. This takes place in a safe, happy, child-centered, and child-friendly setting where the children experience the joy of learning and growing. They are encouraged to learn through experience in a stimulating environment, guided by experienced and well-trained teachers convinced that children learn when they are loved, respected and allowed to choose. With this approach the teachers prepare the environment and plan activities, making every effort to encourage the individuality and potential of each child. Our education encompasses spiritual, social, emotional, physical, intellectual and linguistic dimensions. In the Pre-School we follow the Montessori Method. This blends very well with the Sólta and Aistear programmes, the Irish programmes for children between three and six years.

Pre-School 1

Pre-School 1 offers the child a flexible play and learning environment, catering for her/his individual needs. Language development is very important at this stage, and with increasing vocabulary the child begins to use sentences rather than single words. Awareness of others becomes noticeable at this stage. The teachers take every opportunity to educate for good relationships and behaviour, in a happy and relaxed atmosphere. We build up the child's confidence in a positive manner, promoting self-esteem and encouraging her/him to talk freely in an atmosphere of trust and care. Our goal is to support the children on their journey of life-long learning.

Activities: imaginative play in play room, jigsaws, building bricks, Montessori practical life and sensorial exercises, physical education, arts and crafts, playball, storytelling, drama, music, songs, rhymes, pictures, playdoh, quiet time with books. A theme is planned for each month, expressed in relevant stories, poems, pictures, numbers etc.



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Pre-School 2

Our focus in Pre-School 2 is to enrich language and number, and to approach the cultural subjects of the Montessori programme using the various graded pieces of Montessori material. Pre-School 2 is a more structured environment where the child learns to concentrate through working on more individualised material. The task of socialisation continues and the child learns to give and take, to respect others and to respect property.

Activities: imaginative play, poems, songs, drama, story-telling, number material and everything that helps to develop language, creative activities, PE and Playball.

A theme is planned for each month.

Pre-School 3

The aim of Pre-School 3 is to prepare the child for the exciting next step of entry to Junior School. The Aistear programme is integrated with the Montessori programme, and the child is introduced to the more advanced pieces of number, pre-reading and pre-writing equipment.

The child grows more aware of her/his abilities and enjoys making choices and achieving success in tasks. All class activities are geared towards increasing self-esteem and self-confidence, both in personalised work and communication with others. The children are encouraged to listen to others and to express themselves clearly and articulately when it is their turn to speak. They are given many opportunities to express themselves, be creative and experiment. Their interest in the written word increases as they begin to link it with what is read to them. They discover a new world when they begin to read their first words.

Abundant material to aid discovery of number and the written word is made available to them.

The monthly theme gives many opportunities for holistic learning.



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Motor skills become more refined now and so more advanced skills are taught in Playball and PE lessons. Singing, music and drama are also of great benefit, as are all kinds of creative activities: painting, colouring, cutting, sticking and making.

Activities: personalised work on more advanced Montessori materials: number rods, moveable alphabet, writing numbers and letters, tracing shapes and figures, arts and crafts, PE, speaking in front of the class giving news, information etc.

A theme is planned for each month, giving a focus to activities.



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2.0 Health and Safety Policies

2.1 Child Protection Policy

Statement: It is the policy of the Teresian Pre-School to safeguard the welfare of all children by ensuring that they are protected and kept from physical, sexual and emotional harm while they are in the care of our staff. Our Guidelines and Procedures are in keeping with Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2011.

Procedures:

- All staff are carefully selected, trained and supervised.
- All staff are Garda Vetted.
- The Designated Liaison Person is Lynda McHale. The DLP deals with the Health Boards, An Garda Síochána and other parties in connection with all concerns or allegations of abuse.
- The Health Board is notified where a person has a reasonable suspicion or reasonable grounds for concern that a child may have been or is being abused or at risk of abuse.
- Reporting procedures are in place and confidentiality is kept.
- A written record is kept of all that takes place.

Definitions of Abuse

Child Welfare Concern:

A problem experienced directly by a child, or by the family of a child, that is seen to impact on the child's welfare or development, which warrants assessment and support.

NEGLECT

“An omission, where the child suffers significant harm or impairment of development by being deprived of food, clothing, warmth, hygiene, intellectual stimulation, supervision and safety, attachment to affection from adults, medical care.” (Children First 2.2.1.)



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EMOTIONAL ABUSE

“Emotional abuse is normally to be found in the relationship between a parent/carer and a child rather in a specific event or pattern of events. It occurs when a child’s developmental need for affection, approval, consistency and security are not met.” (Children First 2.3.1.)

PHYSICAL ABUSE

“Physical abuse is that which results in actual or potential physical harm from an interaction, which is reasonably within the control of a parent or person in a position of responsibility, power or trust.” (Children First 2.4.1.)

SEXUAL ABUSE

“Sexual abuse occurs when a child is used by another person for his or her gratification or sexual arousal or for that of others.” (Children First 2.5.1.)

REPORTING PROCEDURES

When you have a concern about a child:

- Staff/volunteer reports to Line Manager/Designated Liaison Person (i.e. Pre-School Principal, Lynda McHale)
- DLP contacts the Duty Social Worker for informal consultation or to make a standard report
Or
- An Garda Siochana - If a child is in immediate danger and the Duty Social Worker cannot be reached.
- DLP informs parents of concern and action taken unless this is likely to put the child further at risk.

| Procedure for reporting a child protection concern | Procedure for reporting allegations of abuse against staff |
|--|--|
| Staff speak to the Designated Liaison Person | Inform Principal/Employer |
| DLP consults with statutory authorities | Protective measures |
| DLP reports to Tusla (on advice) | Principal advises the accused (right to reply) |
| | Disciplinary Procedure |



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| | |
|--|-----------------------|
| | Statutory Authorities |
|--|-----------------------|

2.2 Risk Management Policy

Section 1

Name of service being provided:

The Teresian School, 12 Stillorgan Road, Donnybrook, Dublin 4.

Section 2

Nature of service and principles to safeguard children from harm:

Pre-school and Junior School (ages 2 – 12 years)

The Teresian School acknowledges the duty of care to safeguard and promote the welfare of our students and is committed to ensuring safeguarding practice reflects statutory responsibilities, government guidance and complies with best practice. This policy recognises that the welfare and interests of the children are paramount in all circumstances. It aims to ensure that regardless of age, ability or disability, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation, socio-economic background, all children have a positive and enjoyable learning experience in a safe and child centered environment. The Teresian School acknowledges that young children, disabled children and those from ethnic minority communities can be particularly vulnerable to abuse and we accept responsibility to take reasonable and appropriate steps to ensure their welfare. The Children's First Act 2015 places a legal obligation on teachers registered with the Teaching Council (referred to as mandated persons), to report child protection concerns at or above a defined threshold to Tusla – Child and Family Agency. These mandated persons must also assist Tusla, on request, in its assessment of child protection concerns about children who have been the subject of a mandated report.



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Section 3

Risk assessment:

The Teresian School has carried out an assessment of any potential for harm to a child while availing of our services. Below is a list of the areas of risk identified and the list of procedures for managing these risks.

| | Risk Identified | Procedure in place to manage risk identified |
|----|--|--|
| 1. | New staff not vetted | Safe recruitment procedures are in place and a vetting disclosure is obtained for new staff members. |
| 2. | New Staff unaware of procedures and policies | New staff are made aware of policies (especially; Child Protection Policy, Health and Safety Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy and Code of Behaviour Policy) procedures and receive training on the Children's First Act 2015. New staff are aware the Designated Liaison Person the principal and their role. |
| 3. | Unauthorised visitors entering | Electronic gates at entrance and buzzer system in place in the Pre-School. |
| 4. | Pre-School accidents | Student/adult ratios are observed in Pre-School (i.e. 1 to 6 in PS 2 and 1 to 11 in PS 3) and students are adequately supervised at all times. |
| 5. | Playground accidents | Students are carefully supervised during break and lunch times. If the playground is icy signs advising this are put up and salt is put on the ground. |
| 6. | Parents unaware of Parental | Parents are aware of the Parental Involvement Policy which outlines the complaints procedure. This policy is available on the school website. |



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| | | |
|-----|-----------------------------------|---|
| | Complaints Procedure | |
| 7. | No safe sleep procedures in place | A safe sleep policy is in place and adhered to. All Pre-school staff are trained in safe sleep procedures. Children are regularly checked on by staff members entering the sleep room and checking the monitor regularly. |
| 8. | No nappy changing policy in place | A nappy changing policy is in place and adhered to. All staff wash their hands and the toddler's hands after nappy changing. |
| 9. | Bullying | An Anti-bullying policy is in place and adhered to by students, staff and parents. |
| 10. | Carpark accident | Letter sent to parents advising of carpark etiquette and advised to slow down. Painted lines defining a pedestrian walkway. |

Section 4

Procedures:

Our Child Safeguarding Statement has been developed in line with requirements under the Children First Act 2015, the Children First: National Guidance, and Tusla's Child Safeguarding: A Guide for Policy, Procedure and Practice. In addition to the procedures listed in our risk assessment, the following procedures support our intention to safeguard children while they are attending our school:

1. Procedure for the management of allegations of abuse or misconduct against staff or volunteers in The Teresian School:

- The Principal of the school shall privately inform the employee/volunteer of the allegations and whether it has been reported to the Tusla and the Gardaí.
- The Principal will give the employee a written record of the allegation.



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- If the employee is required to absent him/herself – the principal will inform Tusla and the Gardaí.
- When reported to Tusla, the employee has an opportunity to respond.
- The principal will pass this response to Tusla and the Gardaí.
- The principal will maintain close contact with the Tusla and the Gardaí – ensure strict confidence.

2. Procedure for the safe recruitment and selection of workers and volunteers to work in the school

- Prevent the employment/deployment of unsuitable individuals and maintain a safe recruitment and vetting policy.
- New staff members and volunteers are required to obtain vetting disclosures through the school.
- All retrospective vetting to be completed by December 2017.
- Promote and prioritise the safety and wellbeing of our students.
- Ensure robust safeguarding arrangements and procedures are in operation.

3. Procedure for the provision of and access to child safeguarding training and information, including the identification of the occurrence of harm

- Provide Child Protection training for staff, facilitated by the PDST.
- Provide reviewed policies, ensure staff understand the policies and procedures in place. Ensure everyone understands their roles and responsibilities in respect of safeguarding and are provided with appropriate information and training to recognise, identify and respond to signs of abuse, neglect and other safeguarding concerns relating to children. Revisit these policies and procedures regularly at staff meetings.



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4. Procedure for the reporting of a child protection or welfare concerns to Tusla

- Staff should **seek advice and guidance** from the designated liaison person (The Principal) or Tusla if they are unsure about whether or not to report a concern in the school.
- Staff and volunteers have a responsibility to report to Tusla using the Report Form where there is **reasonable grounds for concern**.
- **Reporting concerns** the concern is reported to Tusla (and the Gardaí if necessary), a written record is securely retained. The written record should have all of the information available; what they have observed and when, signs of physical injury described in detail, any comment by the child concerned, or any other person, about how an injury occurred. The record should be signed and dated and given to the DLP who securely retains it.
- It is **not advised to talk to parents/guardians before reporting**, as it may further endanger the child or the person making the report.
- The principal will ensure appropriate action is taken in the event of incidents/concerns of abuse and support provided to the individuals who raise or disclose the concern.
- The principal will ensure the confidential, detailed and accurate records of all safeguarding concerns are maintained and securely stored

5. Procedure for maintaining a list of mandated persons in the school

- Every teacher registered with the Teaching Council is a mandated person according to the Act. A list of mandated persons employed by the school will be maintained and updated by the principal.

6. Procedure for appointing the relevant person

- The Relevant Person in The Teresian School for the purposes of the Act will be the Designated Liaison Person who is the school Principal (Lynda McHale).



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Section 5

Implementation

We recognise that implementation is an ongoing process. The Teresian School is committed to the implementation of this Child Safeguarding Statement and the procedures that support our intention to keep children safe from harm while attending our school. This Child Safeguarding Statement will be reviewed on _____, or as soon as practicable after there has been a material change in any matter to which the statement refers.

Ratified:

Date: _____

Manager: _____

Principal: _____

Relevant Person under the Children First Act 2015: _____



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2.3 Fire Safety Policy

The Teresian Pre-School complies with all the relevant Fire Regulations and recommendations in the Department of the Environment's Fire Safety in Pre-Schools booklet.

Procedures:

- The Pre-School has all the relevant fire safety equipment recommended by the Department of the Environment including fire extinguishers, smoke alarms and fire blankets and their equipment is checked annually.
- Fire Drill instructions are posted in the Pre-School rooms.
- The assembly point is known to all adults – the lower end of the hockey pitch.
- A fire drill is carried out monthly with children and staff.
- A record is kept of all the fire drills carried out.
- All Pre-School staff members are certified Fire Warden Officers (training provided by Safety Ireland, copy of certificates retained).
- Appropriate furnishings and bedding is provided for the purpose of fire safety.
- There are three fire escape doors in the Pre-School.
- All fire equipment is listed along with their most recent service date.
- A record of all Fire Door Inspections will be maintained monthly to ensure that all Fire Doors are working correctly.
- A Fire Detection & Alarm System General Register will be used to record any incidents or activation in relation to the fire detection system. A monthly sounder system will be carried out on all alarms.
- A Record of Emergency Lighting Equipment Inspection will be used to record dates of service and ensure that all lighting is maintained in line with the required standards.

Fire Drill

Fire Evacuation drills will be carried out to simulate fire conditions. No advance warning will be given, other than to specific staff for the purposes of safety and the avoidance of a false call being made to the Fire Service.

- The alarm will be set off manually.



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- The staff and students will make their way to the assembly point (right side of the hockey pitch).
- Class teachers will bring the attendance record.
- The fire officer will check each room to ensure no person is left in the building.
- At the assembly point all children and staff will be accounted for using the Attendance Records.
- A record of the fire drill will be maintained including the date, classes taking part, the evacuation time, any details of deficiencies and actions to be taken.

Staff Training

- All five Pre-School staff are certified Fire Wardens.
- All staff receive training in Fire Safety and evacuation procedures.
- All staff are familiar with the location of any firefighting equipment and are trained in the use of such equipment.
- Staff will support the children to understand the procedures to follow when they hear the fire alarm.

A Fire Warden has been appointed. Our fire officer is Barbara Small.

As assembly point location has been identified. The location is the right side of the hockey pitch.

2.4 Safe Sleep Policy

The Teresian Pre-school has a Safe Sleep policy in place which facilitates each child's need for sleep or rest. Parents are consulted on their child's sleep routines and staff always follow recommended safe practice. All staff are made aware of the Safe Sleep Policy and of SIDS (Sudden infant Death Syndrome). All children in the Pre-School are over the age of two years. They have access to sleeping mattresses in a separate sleeping room. As the following are not recommended we do not use them:

- travel cots/portable cribs, sofa or settee, car seats or buggies
- pillows, cushions or beanbags, duvets or quilts, fleece blankets
- Smoking is strictly forbidden



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Safe Sleep Practice and Procedures

- Children always put to sleep on back. Head is never covered.
- Clothes are loose and light.
- Bibs, bottles and toys are removed. Soother used only with parental permission.
- Electronic monitor used. Visual checks are also recorded. A sleep log is carried out every 10 minutes by a dedicated staff member.
- Ventilation and temperature (16C – 18C) carefully monitored.
- No mattress is directly adjacent to a heater, curtains or near blinds whose cords could cause strangulation.
- Linen is not shared –separate linen is available for each child and this is laundered weekly or when soiled.
- The sleep room has a viewing panel for staff to keep the children in sight and monitor.
- Lighting is adjustable to ensure a relaxed sleepy environment.
- Mattresses are placed 50 centimetres apart.

2.5 Accidents and Incidents Policy

This policy is underwritten by the Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016 and the Safety, Health & Welfare at Work Act (2005).

Accident Prevention:

- We have appointed a First Aid Officer (Elaine Wyatt) and a Health & Safety Officer (Barbara Small).
- We have a Health & Safety Policy and a Risk Assessment Policy, and we carry out regular risk assessments both indoors and outdoors.
- All staff maintain their levels of qualifications and renew training when it falls due as per regulations and legislation.
- Our building, equipment and materials are well maintained and there is a policy and procedure in place to ensure any defects are dealt with immediately.
- All staff are familiar with the policies and procedures in place.
- A fully stocked first aid box is available in each Pre-School classroom.
- At least one member of staff who holds a First Aid Certificate is on the premises at all times.



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- Adult child ratios are maintained.
- Records are accessible to all relevant staff in case of an emergency.
- Children are supervised at all times. Children are signed in on their arrival and signed out on their departure so that staff know which children are present at any given moment.

Accident Procedures:

- The child or children will be attended to immediately and a staff member will alert the Principal. Each Pre-School classroom has a fully stocked first aid box.
- Minor accidents are treated by a First Aid Officer (Barbara or Elaine). Parents/Guardians sign an incident book.
- The Pre-School has an arrangement with the local surgery in case of an accident or sudden illness.
- In the case of a serious accident the Principal will phone the school doctor and the child's parents/guardians.
- If the child has to go to hospital before the parent/guardian arrives, an adult known to the child must accompany him/her to the hospital and stay there until the parent/guardian arrives.
- All accidents minor or major will be recorded in the Accident & Incident Book.

2.6 Infection Control Policy

Rationale

Infection can lead to serious ill-health among infants and young children. Infection control procedures seek to reduce the risk of children getting sick, by ensuring good hygiene is followed and the risk of infection is minimised.

Infection Control Measures

The Teresian Pre-School has a hand washing policy which all staff promote and model for children, after using the toilet, before eating/preparing food, nappy changing facilities are cleaned after each use. High standards of hygiene are maintained, and a daily cleaning



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schedule is adhered to. Used nappies are disposed by individually wrapping and sealing them. Then placed in a lidded bin which is emptied daily. All linen is washed weekly, children do not share bed clothes.

Our immunisation policy will be followed at all times with all children and staff. For the protection of all the staff and children in the Pre-School, children should not attend school if they have the following illnesses or symptoms: diarrhoea, vomiting, a fever of 101F/38°C or any of the following infectious diseases: chicken pox, measles, mumps, scarlet fever, impetigo or conjunctivitis, whooping cough, ringworm, or scabies. An infectious illness must be reported immediately by parents and by the school.

All parents are informed, and a public dated notice is put up in the school. In order to limit the spread of infection if a child becomes ill, has vomited or has a high temperature overnight or in the morning they should be excluded from the Pre-School for at least 48 hours. If a child becomes ill in school, parents are notified immediately, and the child should be picked up as soon as possible. Parents should notify teachers if their child is on antibiotics or if they have given their child any medication including Calpol.

Staff

Staff with a communicable illness should not attend school. They should ring the school as soon as possible. They should stay out of school for 48 hours if they are vomiting or have diarrhoea. All parents are informed of this. Arrangements are made to provide relief cover.

2.7 Administration of Medicine Policy

Medicine

Medicine will only be administered with written permission from parent/guardian. All medicine will be administered by the main teacher in the room. When a child is receiving medicine another staff member should be present. Upon administering the medicine, the staff member must fill out the record form and the witness must sign it. Details must include dosage, time of dosage and staff members involved. No medicine will be administered



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without prior written permission from parent/guardian. Written permission is obtained on enrolment and is reviewed regularly.

Medicines are stored with child's name, name of medicine and expiry date, either in the fridge or in the locked press in the kitchen. Emergency details, and all consent forms, including Sun Cream permission are in each child's record Form.

Allergies

Upon enrolment, the Teresian School obtains written confirmation from parents/guardians of all the child's allergies, including an allergy to any medications such as Calpol or Nurofen. A photograph with the child's name will be displayed in the staffroom of any child who has an allergy requiring immediate attention.

Procedure to be followed should medication be required:

The "Five Rights" is a procedure which will be followed before the administration of medication. It is set out as follows "Right medication, right child, right dosage, right form, right time".

- Parents/Guardians will complete and sign a medication form for the days which the medication is needed
- Only staff members authorised by the Principal are to manage and administer medication
- The member of staff authorised to administer medicines should check the recipients name, prescribed dose.

Staff members authorised to administer medication have a current and valid first aid certificate. The staff member giving the medication will ensure that they document the medication times and dosage precisely and have the process witnessed and signed by another authorised member of staff. Any administration of medication will be documented in a record book and signed by parents/guardians.

Sunscreen

Sunscreen should be applied by parents in the morning. Sunscreen should be supplied by parents to the school. The school will label the sunscreen and re-apply throughout the day when necessary. Children should wear a sun hat during the summer months.



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2.8 Critical Incident Policy

Introduction:

In The Teresian School we aim to protect the well-being of our pupils and staff by providing a safe, tolerant and well catered for environment as outlined in our school philosophy statement.

The school through the Principal, the Staff and the Parents Council has drawn up a critical incident management plan. They have established a Critical Incidents Management Team to steer the development and implementation of the plan.

What is a Critical Incident?

‘A critical incident is any incident or sequence of events which overwhelms the normal coping mechanism of the school and disrupts the running of the school’.

Examples:

- Death, major illness/outbreak of disease (Foot & Mouth)
- Criminal incidents (e.g. Dunblane shooting, Shooting at first communion in Ballymun.)
- Major accidents, serious injury (e.g. ‘Navan bus crash’)
- Suicide
- Civil unrest, war (foreign nationals may be traumatised by events that happened in their country of origin)
- Fire, natural and technological disaster (e.g. school ceiling collapsing in Cork)
- Disappearance of student from home or school (e.g. Midleton incident in Cork)
- Unauthorised removal of student from school or home.
- World events that may affect the student body and/or staff. May be a need for provision of discussion and involvement in ceremonies e.g. 9/11, earthquakes, tsunami etc.



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The Teresian School Critical Incidents Management Team:

Leadership Role: Rosaleen Doherty (Manager), Lynda McHale (Principal)

Communication Role: Rose Phelan (Class 3 Teacher)

Student Liaison/ Counselling Role: Claudia Sabato (Class 6 Teacher)

Chaplaincy Role: Matet Gayondato

Family Liaison Role: Lynda McHale (Principal)

Parents Council Rep: Suzanne McCormack (Parents Council Chairperson)

The first-named person has the responsibility as defined.

The second-named person assists and only assumes responsibility on the absence of the first-named.

Roles and Responsibilities

1. Leadership Role:

Intervention

- Confirm the event
- Activate the Critical Incident response team
- Liaise with the Gardaí/Emergency services
- Lead briefing meetings for staff on the facts as known, give staff members an opportunity to express their feelings and ask questions, outlines the routine for the day
- Express sympathy to family
- Clarify facts surrounding event



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- Make contact with other relevant agencies
- Decide how news will be communicated to different groups (staff, pupils, outside school)

Postvention

- Ensure provision of ongoing support to staff and students
- Facilitate any appropriate memorial events
- Review and evaluate plan

2. Family Liaison Role:

Intervention

- Co-ordinate contact with relevant family
- Consult family about involvement of school in rituals, services etc. (e.g. funeral service)
- Assist with all communication dealing with parents of any pupil affected by the critical incident
- Ensure confidentiality and privacy surrounding the family or families.

Postvention

- Provide ongoing support to families affected by the incident
- Involve, as appropriate, the family or families in school liturgies/memorial services
- Offer to link family with community groups
- Review and evaluate plan

3. Communication Role:

Intervention

- Inform relevant personnel in all three schools (i.e. Pre-School, Junior School & Senior School)
- In consultation with the Principal and Team, prepare a public statement
- The Manager will decide who will address the media
- Organise a designated room to address media promptly
- Ensure telephone lines are free for outgoing and important incoming calls



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- Designate mobile numbers for contact
- Liaise with The Trustees – to keep them informed
- Liaise with relevant outside support agencies

Postvention

- Review and evaluate effectiveness of communication response

4. Student Liaison/ Counselling Role:

Intervention

- Advise the staff on the procedures for identification of vulnerable pupils
- Alert staff to vulnerable pupils
- Outline specific services available in the school
- Put in place clear referral procedures
- Address immediate needs of staff
- Provide materials for staff (from critical incident folder)
- Provide information
- Provide counselling

Postvention

- Provide ongoing support to vulnerable students
- Monitor class most affected
- Refer as appropriate
- Review and evaluate Plan

5. Chaplaincy Role:

Intervention

- Visit home(s), if appropriate
- Assist with prayer services



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- Make contact with other local clergy
- Be available as personal and spiritual support to students, staff and parents

Postvention

- Provide follow-up support to families in conjunction with Home School Community Liaison
- Work in partnership with Critical Incident team
- Review and Evaluate Plan

6. The School Community

Intervention

- The Manager and Principal should keep in close liaison with the Critical Incidents Management Team and convene a meeting with the full team, if deemed necessary.
- The Principal should co-ordinate contact with families.
- The Principal should convene a staff meeting, if deemed appropriate.
- The Principal should extend sympathy to the family and consult with family around involvement of school in e.g. funeral service.
- Assist with all communication dealing with parents of any student affected by critical incident.
- The Principal should ensure a timetable for the day is created. (Adhering to the normal school routine is important, if this is possible).
- Class teachers should take note of any absentees who need to be contacted, list of friends etc.
- Staff should ensure appropriate supervision of students.
- The Principal and Critical Incidents Team should ensure a home visit by two staff representatives within 24 hours, if appropriate.
- The school community should have regard for different religious traditions and faiths that may be involved.

Postvention

- Provide ongoing support to families affected by the incident



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- Involve as appropriate the family in school liturgies/memorial services
- Offer to link family with community support groups
- Review and evaluate plan

Action plan

SHORT-TERM ACTIONS (Day 1)

- Immediate contact with family/families
- Consult with the family regarding appropriate support from the school, e.g. funeral service
- Ensure that a quiet place can be made available for students/staff/parents to reflect (e.g. the chapel)

Media Briefing (if appropriate)

- Designate a spokesperson (usually the Principal)
- Gather accurate information
- Prepare a brief statement (Critical Incidents Team)
- Protect the family's privacy
- It is important to obtain accurate information about the incident
 1. What happened, where and when?
 2. What is the extent of the injuries?
 3. How many are involved and what are their names?
 4. Is there a risk of further injury?
 5. What agencies have been contacted already?
- Contact appropriate agencies
 1. Emergency services
 2. Medical services
 3. H.S.E. Psychology Departments/Community Care Services
 4. NEPS
 5. Duty Social Care Worker



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MEDIUM-TERM ACTIONS (24-72 HOURS)

- Preparation of students/staff attending funeral
- Involvement of students/staff in liturgy if agreed by bereaved family
- Facilitation of students/staffs responses, e.g. Sympathy cards, flowers, Book of Condolences, etc.
- Ritual within the school – as deemed appropriate by the Principal
- Review the events of the first 24 hours
- Reconvene Key Staff/Critical Incident Management Team
- Decide arrangements for support meetings for parents/students/staff
- Decide on mechanism for feedback from teachers on vulnerable students
- Have review of Critical Incident Management Team meeting
- Establish contact with absent staff and pupils
- Arrange support for individual students, groups of students, and parents, if necessary
- Hold support/information meeting for parents/students, if necessary, in order to clarify what has happened
- Give any teacher who feels uncomfortable with involvement in support meetings the choice of opting out
- Arrange, in consultation, with outside agencies, individual or group debriefings or support meetings with parental permission
- Plan for the re-integration of students and staff e.g. absentees, injured, siblings, close relative etc)
- Student Liaison person to liaise with above on their return to school.
- Plan visits to injured
- Family Liaison person + Class Teacher + Principal to visit home/hospital
- Attendance and participation at funeral/memorial service (To be decided)
- Decide this in accordance with parent's wishes, school management decisions and in consultation with close school friends
- School closure (if appropriate)
- Request a decision on this from school management



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LONGER TERM ACTIONS

Monitor students for signs of continuing distress

If over a prolonged period of time, a student continues to display the following, he/she may need assistance from the Health Board. Constant communication with family is essential.

- Uncharacteristic behaviour
- Deterioration in academic performance
- Physical symptoms — e.g. weight loss/gain, lack of attention to appearance, tiredness, restlessness
- Inappropriate emotional reactions
- Increased absenteeism

Evaluate response to incident and amend Critical Incident Management Plan appropriately

- What went well?
- Where were the gaps?
- What was most/least helpful?
- Have all necessary onward referrals to support services been made?
- Is there any unfinished business?

Formalise the Critical Incident Plan for the future

- Inform new staff/new school pupils affected by Critical Incidents where appropriate
- Ensure that new staff are aware of the school policy and procedures in this area
- Ensure they are aware of which pupils were affected in any recent incident and in what way
- When individual pupils or a class of pupils affected by an incident are transferring to a new school, the Principal should brief the Principal of the new school



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Decide on appropriate ways to deal with anniversaries (Be sensitive to special days and events)

- Anniversaries may trigger emotional responses in students/staff and they may need additional support at this time
- Acknowledge the anniversary with the family
- Need to be sensitive to significant days like Birthdays, Christmas, Mother's Day, and Father's Day

Other

- Plan a school memorial service
- Care of deceased person's possessions. What are the parent's wishes?
- Update and amend school records

3.0 Teaching and Learning Policies

3.1 Positive Behaviour Management Policy

It is the policy of the Teresian Pre-School to promote positive behaviour in keeping with our ethos. We encourage self-discipline and consideration for each other, our surroundings and property. We will be consistent in dealing with behaviour issues and good behaviour will be promoted and encouraged at all times. The children are given opportunities of taking turns, sharing, showing politeness and making choices.

Self-discipline is developed by:

- Encouraging and building self-esteem, cooperation and self-control
- Praising and reinforcing positive behaviour
- Setting limits according to the child's age and stage of development and explaining what the consequences of negative behaviour are.
- Explaining clearly what positive and acceptable behaviour is and what is expected in the varying situations.

Any issues that may arise will be worked out in partnership with the parents/guardians to ensure that there is consistency between home and Pre-School. The main teacher in each class will communicate with parents regarding any incidents that may occur. In the case of an



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on-going behaviour problem she will form an action plan for dealing with it, to include strategic behaviour modification techniques and regular review dates.

Challenging behaviour will be dealt with by:

- Distracting the child e.g. asking them to help with another situation
- Redirecting a situation where tension is building up.
- Encouraging children to ask another child if they may play with something they really want after the other child has finished with it.
- Encouraging both sides to explain what happened and giving children time to work out a compromise. We avoid taking sides, judging or assigning blaming.
- Changing activity or environment regularly. Children can become bored or frustrated if activities are too easy or difficult for them.
- Presenting options and consequences to the children
- Monitoring the causes of any misbehaviour and making necessary rearrangements or changes.

It may be necessary to ask parents to seek additional help by referral to other professionals.

Shouting, slapping, humiliation and inappropriate language are prohibited practices for children, staff, and all adults in the Pre-School.

Acceptable, positive behaviour is promoted through the example, positive reinforcement, fairness and respect shown by all the adults who care for the children.

- If behaviour is an issue it will be reported and recorded.
- Reoccurring inappropriate behaviour will be addressed, and a plan put in place by the staff in collaboration with the family of the child.



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4.0 Wellbeing Policies

4.1 Inclusion Policy

The Teresian Pre-School actively promotes inclusive practice, recognising and respecting the rights of all adults and children in our school. All children are welcome to attend the Teresian Pre-School regardless of ability, background, culture, religion, gender or disability. We aim to promote positive attitudes to both similarities and differences in each other and foster each child's critical thinking in order to deal with bias and discrimination. To achieve this we actively engage with children, parents and other organisations as required.

Procedures

The Teresian Pre-School is committed to working with parents in supporting children of all abilities, cultures, identities so that they get a strong sense of belonging. We implement a curriculum that meets the individual needs, interests and learning styles of children through Siolta and Aistear. Staff frequently engage with parents to facilitate information sharing and to ensure parents are involved in planning for their child's learning and development. We encourage staff to have an equality, inclusivity and diversity approach to providing care and education for all. We strive to ensure that the food served in our Pre-School meets the medical, cultural and dietary needs of the children.

The curriculum, activities, books, materials and environment are used to reflect the diversity of all children.

Staff actively discourage stereotyping of gender, culture, background or ability.

In the Teresian Pre-school all children are helped to

- Feel secure and know that their contributions are valued
- Know they belong and are valued as unique individuals
- Feel strong and confident about their identity
- Learn in groups that allow them to experience success
- To participate fully, taking into account children with disabilities



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4.2 Outings Policy

It is policy of the Teresian Pre-School to take the children out on a trip once or twice a year as we believe this plays an important and enriching role in the programme of activities we provide for the children. During such events the safety of the children is paramount.

Procedures:

Parents/guardians must sign a consent form for their children to be taken out on a trip

Parents will be given full details of the trip

There will be a risk assessment of the venue prior to the trip

The adult/child ration on outings is 1:3

All vehicles must have seat belts. Records are kept of vehicles used to transport children with name of drivers and appropriate insurance cover. Insurance is checked on day of outing.

At least one qualified First Aider will accompany the children

Supplies of tissues, wipes, nappies, a First Aid Kit, healthy snacks and water will be taken on trips.

Regular head counts will be taken by the teachers during the outing

Teachers should carry a charged mobile phone and ensure they have parent/guardian contact details with them on outings as well as emergency ambulance number.

A central meeting point will be identified by the main teacher and all staff, adults and children will be made aware of this point. In case of emergency all persons will proceed to the meeting point.

In case of a major accident the First Aider will assess the situation. An adult will contact the ambulance, the child's parents and the school. Adults will remain calm and comfort the other children and remove them from the scene.



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Missing Child Policy

If a child goes missing all teachers and adults will be notified. Two adults should go immediately to the arranged meeting point and search the surrounding area thoroughly. The other children should be grouped together in a safe place without any panic and adequately supervised. If after 10 minutes of thorough searching the child is still missing the main teacher will inform the gardai and then the child's parent/guardian and the school. The search continues during this time.

The main teacher deals with the gardai and the parent/guardian and will co-ordinate any actions instructed by the gardai. Once the situation has been resolved an investigation will take place as to how it occurred and measures will be put in place so that it won't happen again.



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4.3 Policy on Authorisation to Collect Children

- Children may only be collected by persons named on the registration form.
- Parents/Guardians must notify the staff in person or in writing if another person is to collect the child. If this person is not known to the staff they will ask for identification.
- The parent should provide the name, address, contact number of the persons authorised to collect their children and state the relationship of this person to the child.
- Authorised persons must be over 18 years of age.
- The Pre-School must be informed immediately if there are any changes to those authorised to collect their child.

The Pre-School reserves the right to refuse entry to the service any person authorised of otherwise if it is determined that they pose a risk of harm to the safety, health and welfare of the staff or children.



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4.4 Healthy Eating Policy

Food and drink provided in the Teresian Pre-School are nutritious and comply with the dietary and religious requirements of all children. Hot lunch is provided by Little Dinners, who comply with food safety practices. The storage, preparation of food in the Pre-School complies with HACCP requirements. Staff are trained in food handling and safety.

Meals in the Teresian Pre-School are treated as a social occasion. We encourage children to be independent at meal and snack times. All adults working with their particular group of children sit with them and listen and chat and make this an enjoyable experience.

The Teresian Pre-School aims to promote healthy eating habits by:

- Providing the children with a balanced nourishing diet, high in fruit and vegetables and low in salt and sugar.
- No crisps, popcorn or fizzy drinks are allowed.
- Sweets, chocolate and biscuits are not encouraged.
- Milk is provided at break and lunch time.
- Menus are varied and are posted outside the classroom doors.
- Positive steps are taken to encourage the children to be physically active.
- The Teresian School has a nut free rule.

Staff will be made aware if any of the children in the Teresian Pre-School have any allergies.



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4.5 Outdoor Play Policy

Children learn through play, movement, communication, and sensory experience which the outdoors provides for on a much greater scale than the indoors. The outdoors is one of the best learning environments for young children, providing them with an opportunity to explore, experience and make meaning of the natural world.

The Teresian Pre-School has a large soft outdoor play area. The Pre-School children have outdoor play time twice daily. The outdoor play area is equipped with appropriate toys, ride on toys, play houses and bouncy balls. In addition, the Teresian Pre-School has an outdoor classroom which is utilised more frequently in the Spring and Summer terms.

A risk assessment of the outdoor play area has been carried out. The outdoor play area is well supervised and soft so that if children fall they are unlikely to cut themselves.

Children are brought to wash their hands once they come in from outdoor play.

Outdoor play is weather dependent, if it is wet Pre-School will have their play time in the playroom. If it is sunny parents will be advised to apply sunscreen and provide their children with a sun hat.



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4.6 Settling-in Policy

We would like to welcome you and your child to The Teresian School. We hope that you get to know us and have a happy and successful time in The Teresian School.

Helping your child to settle in:

Children settle into Pre-School in lots of different ways. Some children will move confidently into Pre-School while other children may be nervous and anxious about leaving the parent/guardian, most children will be somewhere in between. Please try not to worry if your child experiences difficulties – it is a very normal part of a child's development. We also recognise that many parents will find this a difficult and sometimes upsetting process. We hope that you can use our experience to support you and your child in whatever way suits you.

The settling-in period:

Different children need different amounts of time to settle in. We recommend that you plan for two weeks to support your child. The settling-in period is a time for your child to get to know his or her teacher.

Pre-Admission

- The Teresian Pre-School will provide information on the Settling-in policy to the parents/guardians on initial enquiry.
- The Pre-School teacher will learn from parents/guardians about the child's feeding and sleeping routine.
- Parents must complete the registration Form with all the relevant details about the child, especially contact and collection information.

The Teresian Pre-School aims to work closely with parents/guardians to support the move from home to a new setting. The Pre-School aims to ensure each child feels



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secure and confident. The Pre-School will work with parents to help children with any difficulties that may arise. Before a child starts the Teresian Pre-School they are invited in with their parents for an information session and tour with the Principal. When a child starts the class teacher explains the settling-in process to the parents/guardians and they jointly decide on the best way to help the child to settle into the Pre-School.

4.7 Photographs and DVD Recording/Videoing Policy

The purpose of this policy is to set out what is considered to be the appropriate use of internet, photographic and recording devices. This policy ensures a Pre-School child is not permitted access to the internet, photographed or recorded without prior signed permission.

Email and Internet Usage

The internet is not to be accessed by children unless under the supervision of service educators for the purpose of educational research or learning opportunities.

Class photographs are taken of the Pre-School and Junior School children for the school calendar and for the school yearbook. The parents are notified.

Teachers take photographs of the children in the classroom, in the garden and on their school outings. These are used for projects or displays inside the school and for the school website and yearbook. They are never used for any purpose outside the school. Sometimes teachers request photographs from parents for school projects.

A DVD is taken of the Junior Christmas Concert and this is sold to parents only, after Christmas. Photographing, Recording, making videos to put in the public media is not permitted without permission from the children's parents.



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4.8 Supervision Policy

The Teresian Pre-School engages in supervision to provide an opportunity to monitor and ensure quality of practice as well as providing support and feedback to staff. Any issues arising in the workplace are addressed in a timely and supportive manner. Staff are encouraged to put forward new ideas, make suggestions for changes or to request additional training. Staff supervision is provided by the Principal.

- A programme of support and supervision exists between the Principal and each staff member.
- Meetings are held will be held with all staff on a bi-monthly basis by the Principal.
- Minutes of these meetings will be recorded.
- Actions arising from Support & Supervision meetings will be reviewed at the next meeting.
- A review will take place at the end of each staff member's probationary period and thereafter annually.
- The annual review or appraisal is carried out for the purpose of giving the employee feedback of the work of the year, provide support for staff in their role, provide opportunities to discuss ideas and concerns and plan objectives for the year ahead.
- The appraisal will include a review of the job description which may be updated as necessary by agreement of both parties.
- Both the Principal and staff member will sign a record of the appraisal meeting.
- Records of the appraisal will be kept confidential to the Principal except in cases of formal disciplinary or grievances or with the joint agreement of both parties.
- All staff personnel files will be retained for six years after the person has ceased employment.

4.9 Complaints Policy

The Teresian Pre-School welcomes any suggestions, recommendations, comments or complaints made by the children or their parents in relation to our childcare service.

Complaints should be made to the Principal. Every attempt should be made to resolve the matter as amicably as possible and to the parent's satisfaction.



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If agreement cannot be reached the parent may make a formal complaint in writing to the person designated to receive complaints, i.e. the Principal. The complaint is recorded.

If the complaint is made against a member of staff, the staff member must be informed that a formal complaint has been made and be given full details. Parents/guardians must be made aware that staff are informed of complaints made relating to their behaviour so that the procedure can be implemented.

If a complaint against a staff member involves a child protection concern a second separate reporting procedure will be followed in keeping with Child Protection procedures.

The parent is sent an acknowledgement that the complaint has been received and informed about how it will be dealt with and within what time limit. The person investigating the formal complaint will keep dated records summarising what has been said and done by those involved. If the parent is not satisfied with the outcome he/she may make a written request to go to the next stage of the procedure which involves an independent mediator or panel.

This person will not be directly involved in the complaint or related to the complainant or the staff member. The panel, having considered all relevant material and talked with all those concerned, will reach a decision and if necessary make recommendations. The complainant and all those involved will be informed of the outcome.

5.0 School Personnel Policies

5.1 Staff Absences Policy

All staff are expected to be in class every day. They should arrive punctually and remain until their finishing time. A high level of punctuality is required after breaks and lunches. Staff are given three days sickness leave during the year. Salary is deducted for any days missed outside these three days. A teacher who is ill should ring the Principal before 8.30 am to let her know she will not be in school as a substitute has to be arranged.

- In the event of a class teacher being absent the Principal will deputise and a substitute will be brought in to cover the assistant's place.
- Adult/child ratios for each room will be maintained.
- Staff must record their time of arrival and departure.



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- Leave requests must be submitted in writing at least two weeks in advance. Leave requests are subject to maintaining staff ratios.
- A medical certificate is required after 3 days of sickness.
- Any unauthorised absences will be addressed by the Principal.
- Relief staff are previous employees of the Pre-School.

5.2 Staff Training Policy

Staff continuous professional development is essential in building a strong, effective team in the joint aim of providing a quality service. The Teresian Pre-School fully supports job specific training and educational development training.

- Each new employee is provided with a mentor for their induction period. The mentor provides on-site support around procedures and policies.
- Opportunities for training in Child Protection, Manual Handling and First Aid will be made available to all staff.
- The Principal will undertake a training needs analysis to identify gaps that need to be filled.

On-Going training

- The minimum training (FETAC Level 5) must be completed before taking up the relevant position.
- The Teresian Pre-School encourages staff to take advantage of training opportunities that are relevant to staff development e.g. Aistear and Siolta.
- External conferences and CPD in Blackrock Education centre is encouraged and supported financially.
- The Teresian Pre-School offers internal training e.g. Healthcare Ireland Manual Handling and Fire Warden training.

Support & Supervision of Staff

- The Principal meets with the class teachers and assistants regularly where any issues arising in the workplace can be addressed in a timely and supportive manner.



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- Staff are encouraged to put forward new ideas and suggestions for changes in order to progress and develop the Pre-School as much as possible.
- The Principal keeps minutes of these staff meetings.

5.3 Recruitment Policy

The Teresian Pre-School is committed to ensuring that our recruitment procedures are fair, open, and transparent and comply with relevant employment legislation. Personal information will be dealt with confidentially and stored in accordance to data protection legislation.

Procedure

- An advertisement is placed in a national paper, on jobs.ie or on one of the other job sites for Pre-School.
- The applicants are shortlisted according to qualifications, experience, references and manner of responding to advertisement.
- An interview is carried out by two people with the applicants. Records are kept of the interview.
- Selection process: the same questions are asked of each applicant and the same scoring system for each one.
- Two written references are requested, one from a recent employer and follow up verbally.
- The applicant submits Garda Vetting.
- A letter of employment is issued.
- The successful applicant received important policies e.g. Child Protection policy.
- The new staff member undertakes a period of induction and receives support throughout their first year.