



**Be Safe
Stay Safe**

**WITH EDMUND
RICE COLLEGE**



**A Parent's/Guardian's
Guide To Safeguarding**

Introduction

In Edmund Rice College it is recognised that all staff have a pastoral responsibility to their pupils. Everyone working in the school environment can help to keep children safe and well. In this booklet it is our intention to clearly show how the children in our care can be provided with a safe environment in which to learn.



"Children have the right to be protected from all forms of violence; they must be kept safe from harm; and they must be given proper care by those looking after them. When adults or organisations make decisions that affect children, they must always think first what would be best for the child."

What is safeguarding?

It might be difficult to accept, but every child can be hurt, put at risk of harm or abused, regardless of their age, gender, religion or ethnicity.

Safeguarding legislation and government guidance says that safeguarding means:

- protecting children from maltreatment
- preventing impairment of children's health or development
- ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.
- taking action to enable all children and young people to have the best outcome and "the action we take to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm - is everyone's responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children and families has a role to play."

Who do we safeguard?

At Edmund Rice College we safeguard all the children in our care. However, at times we take action to safeguard those children with a very specific need, such as:

- *A child in need of protection*
- *A child in need*

Who is a child in need of protection?

This refers to any child that experiences any of the following kinds of abuse:

Physical - This is when a child is deliberately hurt or injured

Sexual - This is when a child is influenced or forced to take part in a sexual activity. This can be a physical activity or none physical, e.g. being made to look at an inappropriate image.

Emotional - This is when a child is made to feel frightened worthless or unloved. It can be by shouting, using threats or making fun of someone. It can also be when children see their parents, or visitors to the home, fighting or using violence

Neglect - This is when a child is not being taken care of by their parents or guardians. It can be poor hygiene, poor diet, not keeping appointments for additional support, not coming to school or being left home alone.

Who is a child in need?

A child in need is:

- A looked after child
- considered to be failing at school
- experiencing behavioural difficulties
- in need of protection
- experiencing ill-health, either physical or psychological
- having difficulty accessing services
- having difficulties accessing services
- homeless
- unaccompanied and seeking asylum
- suffering family breakdown
- LGBT (lesbian, gay, bi-sexual, transgender)
- exposed to domestic violence
- misusing substances
- a teenage parent
- a carer
- disabled



What does Edmund Rice College do to safeguard our students?

Our students should be able to come to school and feel safe so that they can achieve their very best.

- ✓ Anyone who works at Edmund Rice College is checked by Police to make sure they are safe to work with our students and then trained to identify child abuse and what to do if they are concerned.

- ✓ The school has a dedicated Safeguarding team that includes a Designated teacher and three deputy designated teachers who receive additional training to know what to do when a concern is brought to them.

- ✓ The staff at Edmund Rice College will always listen to you and will work closely with you if we are concerned about your child.

- ✓ At Edmund Rice College we will help your child to learn about how to keep themselves safe. Lessons can include healthy eating, anti-bullying, e-safety, road safety, healthy relationships, drug and alcohol awareness. As part of these lessons your child will be told what to do if they are worried or concerned about their safety.

What can parents do to safeguard their children?

Parents are the most important people to keep their children safe. You should always:

- ✓ Feel confident to raise a concern about your child
- ✓ Talk to school if you need help or support
- ✓ Read the school policies about safety issues
- ✓ Let the school know if you have any court orders relating to the safety of your child
- ✓ Let the school know if there is a change in your circumstances such as a house move, a new contact number, a change of name, a change or parental responsibility
- ✓ Inform the school if there are any changes to agreed arrangements
- ✓ Let the school know if your child is going to be absent and the reason why.

How can a parent raise a concern?

If a parent has concerns or complaints about his or her own sons or another pupil's safety they may take the following action.

Parent is concerned about son's/other pupil's safety.



May contact the Head of Year or Form Tutor



If still concerned, contact the College's Designated Teacher for Child Protection.



If still concerned, contact the Principal or the Chairman of the Board of Governors.

Edmund Rice College Safeguarding Team

At Edmund Rice College we have a Safeguarding Team in place to deal with any concerns raised by students and/or their parents.

*Head of Pastoral
Designated Teacher*



Mr McMeekin

*Assistant Head of Pastoral
Deputy Designated Teacher*



Mrs Davey

Deputy Designated Teacher



Mrs Ritchie

Deputy Designated Teacher



Miss Deery

Support from External Agencies

Edmund Rice College also has a school counsellor and a Youth Worker who visit our school once a week to talk to pupils and help them get through some difficult circumstances.



Joanne McConaghie

School counsellor

Vanessa Tweed

Youth Worker



Parents may also wish to contact Social Services through their local Gateway Team



Gateway Services
110 Saintfield Road
BELFAST
BT8 6HD



South Eastern Gateway Team (Antrim, Carrickfergus, Newtownabbey and Larne)
The Beeches
76 Avondale Drive
Ballyclare
BT39 9DB
Telephone: 028 9334 0165
Email: southeastern.gateway@northerntrust.hscni.net

Should you need to report any incident of child abuse to the Police contact:

- The police service on 101, the non-emergency telephone number, where you will be put in contact with a specially trained police officer.
- In an emergency situation dial 999.

Thank you for taking the time to read our parent guide to safeguarding. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact a member of the Safeguarding Team on 028 90848433.

