

CSS 1

Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment

For: (School Name)

At: (School Address)

This school is a: (tick appropriate)

- primary post-primary special school

In accordance with the requirements of the Children First Act 2015, *Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017, the Addendum to Children First (2019) and 2025, Child Protection Procedures for Schools 2025 and Child Safeguarding: A Guide for Policy, Procedure and Practice, 2nd ed.* (Tusla, 2024), the board of management has adopted the Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment set out in this document.

The board of management has adopted and will implement fully and without modification the department's *Child Protection Procedures for Schools 2025* as part of this overall Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment.

Name of the Designated Liaison Person (DLP):

Name of the Deputy Designated Liaison Person (Deputy DLP/DDLP):

In the absence of the DLP, the Deputy DLP shall assume responsibilities of the DLP

Name of Relevant Person

(In schools this person is the DLP)

Relevant Person can be contacted on:

(insert phone & email)

Under the Children First Act 2015 Relevant Person means a person who is appointed by a provider of a relevant service to be the first point of contact in respect of the Child Safeguarding Statement. This person is nominated by the board of management to manage and provide oversight of child protection concerns/allegations of child abuse.

Name of Chairperson of the board of management, or in an ETB school the Chief Executive or their delegate:

In the event that both DLP and DDLP are absent and unavailable, and where there is no staff member formally acting in their role, the chairperson of the board of management, or in an ETB school the chief executive or their delegate, assumes the role of DLP.

The board of management recognises that child protection and safeguarding permeate all aspects of school life and must be reflected in all of the school's policies, procedures, practices and activities. In all of these, the school will adhere to the following principles of best practice in child protection and welfare. The school will:

- ❑ Recognise that the protection and welfare of children is of paramount importance, regardless of all other considerations.
- ❑ Fully comply with its statutory obligations under the Children First Act 2015 and other relevant legislation relating to the protection and welfare of children.
- ❑ Fully co-operate with the relevant statutory authorities in relation to child protection and welfare matters.
- ❑ Adopt safe practices to minimise the possibility of harm happening to children and protect members of school personnel from the necessity to take unnecessary risks that may leave themselves open to accusations of child abuse.
- ❑ Develop a practice of openness with parents and encourage parental involvement in the education of their children.
- ❑ Fully respect confidentiality requirements as set out in the *Child Protection Procedures for Schools 2025* in dealing with child protection matters.
- ❑ Adhere to the above principles in relation to any vulnerable adult.

Procedures and Measures in Place

Our Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment has been developed in line with requirements under the Children First Act 2015, the *Children First: National Guidance 2017*, and *Child Safeguarding: A Guide for Policy, Procedure and Practice, 2nd ed.* (Tusla, 2024), and the *Child Protection Procedures for Schools 2025*. In addition to the procedures listed in our risk assessment, the following procedures support our intention to safeguard children while they are availing of our service:

- > **Procedure for the Management of Allegations of Abuse or Misconduct against School Personnel Relating to a Child Availing of Our Service**
 - Where any member of school personnel is the subject of any investigation in respect of any act, omission or circumstance in relation to a child attending the school, the school is required to adhere to the relevant procedures set out in Chapter 7 of the *Child Protection Procedures for Schools 2025* and to the relevant agreed disciplinary procedures for school staff which are published on the gov.ie website

- > **Procedure for the Safe Recruitment and Selection of School Personnel to Work With Children**
 - ~ The school is required to adhere to the requirements of the Vetting Act. The selection or recruitment of staff and their suitability to work with children, requires the school to adhere to the statutory vetting requirements of the National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Acts 2012 to 2016, and to the wider duty of care guidance set out in relevant Garda vetting and recruitment circulars published by the Department of Education and Youth and available on the gov.ie website and as outlined in Chapter 10 of the procedures.
 - ~ A written protocol is in place authorising immediate action for cases which require an employee to be immediately absented from school for child safeguarding reasons.

- > **Procedure for Provision of and Access to Child Safeguarding Training and Information, Including the Identification of the Occurrence of Harm**
 - ~ The school provides information and training to members of school personnel in relation to the identification of the occurrence of harm (as defined in the 2015 Act) as follows:
 - ~ The school has provided each member of school personnel, including any new members of school personnel, (employees and volunteers, board of management members, student teachers and those on work experience) with a copy of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment.
 - ~ The school ensures that members of school personnel have availed of relevant training and completed child protection training.
 - ~ The school encourages board of management members to avail of any relevant training and complete child protection training.
 - ~ The board of management ensures that records of all staff and board member child protection training are maintained.

- > **Procedure for the Reporting of Child Protection or Welfare Concerns to Tusla**
 - ~ All members of school personnel are required to adhere to the procedures set out in the *Child Protection Procedures for Schools 2025*, in relation to reporting of child protection concerns to Tusla. Mandated reporting applies to all registered teachers and any other mandated person who may be employed by the school, for example a chaplain or nurse. A full list of those people who are mandated persons is set out in Appendix 1 procedures.

- > **Procedure for Maintaining a List of the Persons (if any) in the Relevant Service Who Are Mandated Persons**
 - ~ There is a procedure in place to maintain a list of mandated persons. Schools may on occasion employ additional staff who are mandated by virtue of their profession. This list will include all registered teachers and identify additional employees that are not registered teachers.

- > **Procedure for Appointing a Relevant Person (In schools this person is the DLP)**
 - ~ There is a procedure in place for appointing a relevant person.

The various procedures referred to in this Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment can be accessed via the school's website, the gov.ie website or will be made available on request by the school.

In accordance with the Children First Act 2015, the Addendum to Children First 2019 and 2025, and the *Child Protection Procedures for Schools 2025*, the board of management has carried out an assessment of any potential for harm to a child while attending the school or participating in school activities. A written assessment setting out the areas of risk identified and the school's procedures for managing those risks is included with the Child Safeguarding Statement.

Note: The procedures and measures in place outlined above, are not intended as exhaustive list. Individual boards of management shall also include in this section such other procedures and measures that are of relevance to the school.

This statement has been published on the school's website or will be made available on request by the school. It has been provided to all members of school personnel, the parents' association (if any), the patron and parents. A copy of this statement and risk assessment will be made available to Tusla and the department if requested.

This Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment will be reviewed annually or as soon as practicable after there has been a material change in any matter to which this statement refers.

Examples of Activities, Risks and Procedures

The examples listed in this document are provided to assist schools in undertaking their risk assessment under the Children First Act, 2015. Schools should note that this list of examples is not intended to be exhaustive, and that the inclusion of an example of a policy or procedure on these lists does not make it mandatory. It is the responsibility of each school to ensure, as far as possible, that any other risks and procedures that are relevant to its own particular circumstances are identified and specified in the written risk assessment and that adequate procedures are in place to address all risks identified.

It is acknowledged that schools already have in place a range of policies, practices and procedures to mitigate the risk of harm to children while they are participating in the activities of the school and that some school activities will carry low or minimal risks of harm compared to others. In the context of the risk assessment that must be undertaken by schools, the Children First Act, 2015 refers to risk as “any potential for harm”.

Therefore, it is important that, as part of its risk assessment process, each school lists and reviews all of its various activities (which shall include identifying those that may carry low risk of harm as well as those that carry higher risks of harm). Doing so will help the school to:

- > Identify, as required under the Children First Act, 2015, any risks of harm that may exist in respect of the school’s activities.
- > Identify and assess the adequacy of the various procedures already in place to manage those risks of harm.
- > Identify and put in place any such additional procedures as are considered necessary to manage any risk identified.

Online Safety

The Addendum to Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017 published in January 2019 clarifies that organisations providing relevant services to children should consider the specific issue of online safety when carrying out their risk assessment and preparing their Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment.

The Guidance on Continuity of Schooling for primary and post-primary schools (April 2020) advises of the importance of teachers maintaining the safe and ethical use of the internet during distance learning and assisting parents and guardians to be aware of their role also. Schools should ensure that their Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) informs and guides remote or distance learning activity.

Risk in the context of this Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment is the risk of “harm” as defined in the Children First Act 2015 and not general health and safety risk. The definition of harm is set out in the Children First Act 2015: “harm” means, in relation to a child— (a) assault, ill-treatment or neglect of the child in a manner that seriously affects or is likely to seriously affect the child’s health, development or welfare, or (b) sexual abuse of the child, whether caused by a single act, omission or circumstance or a series or combination of acts, omissions or circumstances, or otherwise.

Child Safeguarding Risk Assessment

Written Assessment of Risk of Sacred Heart BNS

In accordance with section 11 of the Children First Act 2015 and with the requirements of Child Protection Procedures for Schools 2025, the following is the Written Risk Assessment of Sacred Heart BNS.

1. List of school activities

Daily arrival and dismissal of pupils
Recreation breaks for pupils
Classroom teaching
One-to-one teaching
Access to school throughout the day
Child protection training of school personnel
Record Keeping
Recruitment of school personnel and volunteers/parents in school activities
Prevention and dealing with bullying amongst pupils
Outdoor teaching activities
Toilet Area
Sporting Activities
Use of external personnel to support sports and other extra-curricular activities
Travel to away Sporting Activities
Administration of Medicine
Administration of First Aid
School outings
School trips involving overnight stay
Use of offsite facilities e.g. swimming pool
Curricular provision in respect of SPHE, RSE, Stay Safe
Care of children with SEN including intimate care where needed
Care of pupils with specific vulnerabilities/needs such as:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Members of the traveller community, lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBT) children• Pupils perceived to be LGBT• Pupils from ethnic minorities/migrants, pupils of minority religious faiths• Child on Child Protection Notification System (CPNS)• Children In temporary accommodation
Managing Challenging Behaviour Amongst Pupils
Volunteers/Parents in school related activities
Student teachers undertaking work experience
Students (TY) undertaking work experience
School overwhelmed by critical incident, death of child/ staff member

Other policies and procedures
Use of ICT/Cameras/Mobile Phones
Administration of Medicine
Administration of First Aid
After school use of school premises by other organisations

2. The school has identified the following risk of harm in respect of its activities -

Indicators of harm/abuse not being recognised by school personnel
Harm/Abuse not being reported properly and promptly by school personnel
Risk of child being harmed in the school by a member of school personnel
Risk of child being harmed by a volunteer/parent while child is participating in school activities
Risk of a child being harmed by a member of staff of another organisation or other person while child is participating in school activities
Risk of child being harmed in the school by another child
Risk of child being harmed in the school by volunteer or visitor to the school
Risk of a child being harmed by a member of school personnel, a member of staff of another organisation or other person while child is participating in out of school activities e.g. school trip, swimming lessons
Risk of harm due to bullying of child
Risk of harm due to inadequate supervision of children in school
Risk of harm due to inadequate supervision of children while attending out of school activities
Risk of harm due to inappropriate relationship/communications between child and another child or adult
Risk of harm due to children inappropriately accessing/using computers, social media, phones and other devices while at school
Risk of harm to children with SEN who have particular vulnerabilities
Risk of harm to child while a child is receiving intimate care
Risk of harm due to inadequate code of behaviour
Risk of harm in one-to-one teaching, counselling, coaching situation
Risk of harm caused by member of school personnel communicating with pupils in inappropriate manner via social media, texting, digital device or other manner
Risk of harm caused by member of school personnel accessing/circulating inappropriate material via social media, texting, digital device or other manner

3. The school has the following procedures in place to address the risks of harm identified in this assessment -

The school has a procedure for supervision of children to ensure their safety upon arrival and dismissal
Gates open/close times controlled

Access to school restricted

Prior to the enrolment of a child and on an annual basis thereafter, parents/guardians will be asked to supply the school with the names and contact details of any adult that may be collecting a pupil during the course of the year.

Outside of normal dismissal times of the school, teachers will only release pupils to those nominated by the parent/guardian or where advance notice of another adult collecting the pupil is given by the parent/carer. In the event that another person arrives to collect a child the school will endeavour to contact the parent/guardian to get their permission. Under no circumstances will staff allow a child to leave the school with another person that does not have permission to collect them.

At the normal dismissal time of infants, one of the persons nominated by the parent/guardian must collect the pupil from the school yard/classroom. The school must be notified in advance if someone other than the 'nominated' adult will be collecting a pupil.

Yard duty supervision policy

to ensure appropriate supervision of children during breaks

Accident/report book (Records of accidents /misbehaviour etc.)

Procedures in place for responding to accidents and inappropriate behaviour in the yard

School Personnel are required to adhere to the *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017* and all registered teaching staff are required to adhere to the *Children First Act 2015*

Child Safeguarding Statement and DES procedures made available to all staff

Staff training on Child Protection regularly, and frequent reminders re policy and procedures

Open door culture

Glass panes on doors of all rooms

School has policy in place for one-to-one teaching, open doors, table between teacher & pupil
SEN policy

Glass in windows/doors

Designated place in all rooms with Child Protection docs, CSS, etc.

Reminders and training on policy and procedures

Controlled access at all times

The Provision of information and training for all school personnel

The BOM –

Provides all school personnel with a copy of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement & Risk Assessment.

Requires that all school personnel sign the 'Acceptance of Sacred Heart B.N.S. Child Protection Safeguarding Statement form and return a signed copy to the DLP.

Ensures the DES child protection procedures are made available to all school personnel

Requires that all school personnel, mandated and non-mandated, adhere to the DES *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017*

Ensures staff avail of relevant training

All school personnel are required to do the online Tusla training and provide a copy of the certificate of completion to the DLP

A Croke Park session will be utilised on a regular basis to address the DES child protection requirements of staff either using an outside facilitator or the PDST online training

Encourages the BOM members to avail of relevant training

Maintains record of all staff and board member training

Record Keeping

All school personnel are required to ensure that any sensitive records e.g. child protection monitoring records they are required to keep are maintained in a secure location in the school and are treated with the strictest of confidence.

All such records form part of the school record keeping system and must be filed with the central school records at the end of the school year.

All staff garda vetted

Child Safeguarding Statement & DES procedures made available to all staff

Tusla training module & PDST ELearning, Ongoing regular training

All volunteers/parents regularly involved in school activities are Garda vetted

All volunteers/parents involved in school activities are provided with a copy of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement

All volunteers/parents involved in school activities are required to sign the 'Acceptance of Sacred Heart B.N.S. Child Protection Safeguarding Statement form' and return a signed copy to the DLP

School implements SPHE, RSE, Stay Safe in full

The school has an Anti-Bullying Policy which fully adheres to the requirements of the

Department's *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*

Anti-bullying campaign, e.g. surveys, slogan competition, workshops/speakers

Code of Positive Behaviour

Inclusion Policy

Dignity at work Policy

First Aid procedures

Child Safeguarding Statement and DES procedures made available to all staff

The school has in place a Critical Incident Management Plan

Toileting policy (to do), card system for toilet use at yard times

Supervision policy

Code of behaviour

Vetting procedures

Policy on external persons visiting the school

Health & Safety Policy

External personnel/coaches working with pupils

In accordance with circular No. 0042/2018 'Best practice guidance for primary schools in the use of programmes and/or external facilitators in promoting wellbeing consistent with the Department of Education 'Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice' a member of the teaching staff will always be present when external personnel are working with students.

All external coaches will be garda vetted. A copy of the schools 'Child Safeguarding Statement' will be provided to all external coaches who shall be required to sign the 'Acceptance of Sacred Heart B.N.S. 'Child Safeguarding Statement' including the 'Risk Assessment' document and return the signed copy to the DLP. External coaches will be required to report child protection concerns to the DLP.

A teacher/s will always accompany pupils travelling to sports events.

Policy and procedures for the administration of first aid and medicine to pupils

Training of staff on regular basis

School tours policy – All school trips, outings and tours will be sanctioned by the Principal.

Written parental consent must be given for all outings and tours.

Teaching staff must ensure that activity centres/adventure centres where pupils are being brought to have in place their own CSS and that all supervising staff in activity centres/adventure centres have been Garda vetted.

Swimming policy

Planning for an implementation of the SPHE curriculum and the Stay Safe Programme:

The school implements in full the SPHE curriculum over a two year cycle as outlined in the school plan for SPHE.

The Stay Safe programme will be taught in every class in year 1 of the school's SPHE plan.

All teachers will revise the topic of Touches and Secrets and Telling as part of year 2 of the SPHE plan.

On completion of the Stay Safe programme all teachers are required to sign the "Completion of the Stay Safe Programme" document (available in the Principal's office).

Individual teacher planning documents must indicate when specific objectives of the SPHE curriculum, (including the Stay Safe Programme) will be taught and what specific objectives of SPHE, Stay Safe and RSE will be taught in that period of time.

The Cuntas Míosiúl of individual teachers will highlight the SPHE content objectives covered and the Stay Safe lessons covered in that month.

School implements SPHE, RSE & Stay Safe in full

Encourages staff to avail of relevant training/In-Service

SEN policy

Policy on Intimate Care

The school implements in full the SPHE curriculum

The school implements in full the Stay Safe programme. The school has an Anti-Bullying Policy which is implemented in full.

School will liaise with TUSLA re children in care and children on CPNS.

Principal/Deputy Principal/will inform staff of relevant child safeguarding issues on a need to know basis.

Care of pupils with specific vulnerabilities/needs

All school personnel are provided with a copy of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement and are required to adhere to the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools 2017.

The school implements in full the SPHE curriculum

The school implements in full the Stay Safe programme. The school has an Anti-Bullying Policy which is implemented in full.

School will liaise with TUSLA re children in care and children on CPNS.

Principal/Deputy Principal will inform staff of relevant child safeguarding issues on a need to know basis.

In addition to the school's Code of Behaviour, Individual Safeguarding Plans/Positive Behaviour Management Strategies are in place for relevant pupils which are reviewed every six months or sooner if necessary. Parents/Guardians of pupils involved are consulted with in drawing up such plans and strategies.

Patterns of behaviour and triggers are identified where possible to try to minimise re-occurrence.

When necessary the school will seek appropriate clinical and therapeutic supports for pupils.

Behaviour Incident Forms/Behaviour Checklists are completed for all pupils who are presenting with challenging behaviour. In all such cases parents/guardians of all pupils involved will be notified.

Once a term a report on the management of challenging behaviour and serious incidents will be brought to the B.O.M. by the Principal.

Vetting procedures

Policy on external persons visiting the school

Child Safeguarding Statement & DES procedures made available to all staff, including student teachers

Vetting procedures

Policy to not have unsupervised access to any children

In the event that students have a child protection concern or that a child makes a disclosure to them, the student must report the matter to the DLP.

The school has in place a Critical Incident Management Plan

Other policies and procedures

The school has a Health & Safety policy.

The school complies with the agreed disciplinary procedures for teaching staff

The school has a Special Educational Needs policy.

The school has an intimate care policy/plan in respect of students who require such care (To Do)

The school has in place a policy and procedures for the administration of medication to pupils.

The school has in place an ICT policy in respect of ICT by pupils.

The school has in place a mobile phone policy in respect of usage of mobile phones by school personnel including pupils

Important Note: It should be noted that risk in the context of this risk assessment is the risk of “harm” as defined in the Children First Act 2015 and not general health and safety risk.

In undertaking this risk assessment, the board of management has endeavoured to identify as far as possible the risks of harm that are relevant to this school and to ensure that adequate procedures are in place to manage all risks identified. While it is not possible to foresee and remove all risk of harm, the school has in place the procedures listed in this risk assessment to manage and reduce risk to the greatest possible extent.

In accordance with Section 11 of the Children First Act 2015 and with the requirements of Chapter 9 of the *Child Protection Procedures for Schools 2025*, the following is the written Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment.

In undertaking this Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment, the board of management has endeavoured to identify as far as possible the risks of harm that are relevant to this school and to ensure that adequate procedures are in place to manage all risks identified. While it is not possible to foresee and remove all risk of harm, the school has in place the procedures listed in this risk assessment to manage and reduce risk to the greatest possible extent.

This Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment was reviewed by the board of management on (most recent review date).

Signed: *
Chairperson of the board of management

Date:

Signed: *
Principal/Secretary to the board of management

Date:

This Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment is expected to be reviewed again on (expected review date).

* Document to be printed and signed with original signatures

