



Peterswell NS

Child Safeguarding and Risk

Assessment

1st October 2026

CSS1

Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment

For:	St Thomas NS	(School Name)
At:	Gortaloman, Peterswell, Co Galway	(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):

Eimear Marren

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

Michael Mulkerrins

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

Name of Relevant Person

Eimear Marren

(In schools this person is the DLP)

Relevant Person can be contacted on:

0879017914

teachermrsmarren@gmail.com

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:

Francis Walsh

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 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.

Child Safeguarding Risk Assessment

	List of School Activities	Risks Identified Against Each School Activity	Procedures/Measures in place to Mitigate Risk
1.	Training of school personnel in Child Protection matters	Risk of harm not being recognised or reported promptly	Child Safeguarding Statement & DES procedures made available to all staff DLP& DDLP to attend Oide face to face training All Staff to avail of Oide in person training BOM records all records of staff and board training
2.	Care of Children with special educational needs, including intimate care needs	Risk of harm to a child by school personnel while a child is receiving intimate care	Policy on intimate care
3.	Toilet areas – Use of toilet/changing facilities in school	Inappropriate behaviour Risk of harm due to inadequate supervision of children in school	Usage and supervision policy No child will ever be on their own with a staff member in the toilet.
4.	Curricular Provision in respect of SPHE, RSE, Stay safe.	Non-teaching of same	School implements SPHE, RSE, Stay Safe in full BOM signs off on teaching of Stay Safe Programme each year
5.	Daily arrival and dismissal of pupils	Harm from older pupils, unknown adults on the playground	Arrival and dismissal supervised by Teachers
6.	Managing of challenging behaviour amongst pupils, including appropriate use of restraint	Injury to pupils and staff and child himself/herself	Restraint Policy Health & Safety Policy Code Of Behaviour SNA for monitoring behaviour
7.	Students participating in work experience	Harm by student	Work experience Policy Child Safeguarding Statement.

St Thomas' NS Child Protection Statement and Risk Assessment

	List of School Activities	Risks Identified Against Each School Activity	Procedures/Measures in place to Mitigate Risk
			Garda Vetted by Secondary School Code of Behaviour
8.	Student teachers undertaking training placement in school	Harm to pupils	Garda Vetting Code of Conduct Child Safeguarding statement
9.	Recreation breaks for pupils – indoors	Harm to pupils by other pupils	Code of Behaviour Health and Safety Policy School has supervision policy to ensure appropriate supervision of children during breaks
10.	Recreation breaks for pupils – outdoors	Harm to pupils by other pupils	Code of Behaviour Health and Safety Policy School has yard supervision policy to ensure appropriate supervision of children during breaks

	List of School Activities	Risks Identified Against Each School Activity	Procedures/Measures in place to Mitigate Risk
11.	Classroom teaching	Risk of harm of emotional abuse by teacher	Child Protection Training Child Safeguarding Statement Code of behaviour
12.	One to one teaching and Counselling	Risk of harm of emotional abuse by teacher	Child Protection Training Child Safeguarding Statement Code of behaviour
13.	One to one teaching	Harm by school personnel	School has policy in place for one to one teaching Open doors Table between teacher and pupil Glass in window in doors
14.	Outdoor teaching activities	Harm to pupils	SNA policy Garda Vetting Child Protection Training
15.	Sporting Activities	Risk of child being harmed by a member of school personnel, a member of staff of another	School personnel supervision Child Protection Training Garda Vetting Policy of external service providers

St Thomas' NS Child Protection Statement and Risk Assessment

	List of School Activities	Risks Identified Against Each School Activity	Procedures/Measures in place to Mitigate Risk
		organisation or other person while child participating in activity.	
16.	School outings and use of off-site for school activities	Risk of child being harmed by a member of school personnel, a member of staff of another organisation or other person while child participating in activity. Risk of harm due to inadequate supervision by school personnel	Recommended ratio of teacher/adult supervision School personnel undergo child protection training Policy and clear procedures re school outings Code of Behaviour Garda Vetting
17.	Swimming Lessons	Member of the Public harms a child in our care Swimming Instructors harm a child in our care	School personnel supervision Private times when no members of the may use the pool. Parents are instructed not to enter the dry area. The exception to this will be made for parents of pupils with complex physical need which requires parental assistance and only then in the presence of a member of school staff. Effective supervision of all parents will be maintained and such a parent will be vetted in the first instance. School personnel supervision The provider of the swimming service will be expected to complete and return a consent agreement form and provide the Garda Vetting Certificate serial numbers of all instructors working in their service.
18.	School trips involving overseas travel	Risk of child being harmed by a member of school personnel, a member of staff of another	Recommended ratio of teacher/adult supervision is implemented. (1-10) School personnel undergo child protection training

St Thomas' NS Child Protection Statement and Risk Assessment

	List of School Activities	Risks Identified Against Each School Activity	Procedures/Measures in place to Mitigate Risk
		organisation or other person while child participating in activity.	Policy and clear procedures in respect of school outings Code of Behaviour
19.	Annual Sports/Fun Day	Risk of child being harmed by a member of school personnel, a parent volunteer and others	School personnel supervision Child Protection Training Garda Vetting Code of Behaviour Health & Safety Policy
20.	Fundraising events involving pupils	Risk of harm	School personnel supervision Child Protection Training Garda Vetting Code of Behaviour Health & Safety Policy
21	School transport arrangements including use of bus escorts	Risk of harm	School personnel supervision School personnel undergo child protection training Policy and clear procedures in respect of school outings Code of Behaviour
22	Administration of Medicine and administration of First Aid	Risk of harm due to lack of knowledge/training	School has in place a policy on Administration of First Aid and one for Administration of Medicine First Aid station with mediwipes
23	Prevention and dealing with bullying amongst pupils	Risk of harm to pupils	School personnel supervision Child Protection Training School implements SPHE, RSE, Stay Safe in full Teachers undertake training for these programmes Anti-Bullying Policy which fully adheres to the requirements of the Department's procedures Code of Behaviour
24	Care of pupils with specific vulnerabilities/ needs such as - Pupils from ethnic minorities/migrants Members of the Traveller community - Lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBT) children	Risk of harm due to lack of knowledge/training Risk of harm due to inadequate Code of Behaviour	Child Protection Training Up to date Code of Behaviour Anti-Bullying Policy Code of Conduct

St Thomas' NS Child Protection Statement and Risk Assessment

	List of School Activities	Risks Identified Against Each School Activity	Procedures/Measures in place to Mitigate Risk
	- Pupils perceived to be LGBT - Pupils of minority religious faiths - Children in care - Children on CPNS		
25	Recruitment of school personnel including - - Teachers - SNA's - Caretaker/Secretary/Cleaners - Sports coaches - External Tutors/Guest Speakers - Volunteers/Parents in school activities - Visitors/contractors present in school during school hours Visitors/contractors present during/after school activities	Harm not recognised or properly or promptly reported	Child Safeguarding Statement & DES procedures made available to all staff DLP& DDLP to attend Oide face to face training All Staff to avail of Oide in person training Vetting Procedures Policy for Parents / Volunteers Policy on Visiting Contractors
26	Use of school premises by other organisation during school day	Risk of harm by outside personnel Risk of harm due to lack of knowledge/training Risk of harm due to inadequate Code of Behaviour	Child Protection Training Up to date Code of Behaviour Anti-Bullying Policy Policy and procedures for external Coaches
27	Use of school premises after school by other organisations	Risk of harm to pupils	Child Protection Training Garda Vetting
28	Participation by pupils in religious ceremonies/religious instruction external to the school	Risk of harm to pupils - Exclusion	Supervision of school personnel School personnel undergo child protection training Garda Vetting Policy and clear procedure in respect of school outings Code of Behaviour
29	Use of Information and Communication Technology by pupils in school	Risk of harm - Bullying	ICT Policy Anti-Bullying Policy Code of Behaviour Safer Internet Day

St Thomas' NS Child Protection Statement and Risk Assessment

	List of School Activities	Risks Identified Against Each School Activity	Procedures/Measures in place to Mitigate Risk
30	Application of sanctions under the school's Code of Behaviour including detention of pupils, confiscation of phones	Harm to pupil	Code of Behaviour Child Protection Training Supervision Policy
31	Use of video/photography/other media to record school events	Risk of circulation of digital recordings without parents' consent.	Parents are required to sign a permission form on registration for any use of children's images of school activities on website and blog Announcement at each event to use photography for personal use only Internet Use Policy
32	Use of Digital Devices with Internet Connectivity In Class	Children may be harmed by exposure to inappropriate/harmful material and/or other adults	The Internet Filter operated by the PDST blocks websites which have identified as harmful and/or inappropriate. Devices are regularly checked to ensure the highest blocking standard. Teachers are expected to monitor activity in their class. Acceptable Use Policy which will outline the school's expectations for the use of devices with internet connectivity and/or recording devices will be included in Induction Pack for entrants.
33	Use of Personal Digital/Mobile Devices in School	Children may be harmed by exposure to inappropriate/harmful material and/or other adults Children may have their image/voice recorded and uploaded to the internet	Not permitted in school at any time. In an exceptional circumstance, a device may be required by a pupil immediately after school with parent/guardian must request permission in writing. Device must be switched off and kept by teacher. Child will request return at end of school day. The school accepts no responsibility/liability for a device whilst retained in the locked drawer and/or for non-return of a device at the end of the school day...Pupils who are found in possession of a mobile phone or digital recording device which has not been notified to the school, or who has a mobile phone or

St Thomas' NS Child Protection Statement and Risk Assessment

	List of School Activities	Risks Identified Against Each School Activity	Procedures/Measures in place to Mitigate Risk
			digital recording device switched on at all times in the school, will have it confiscated and will only be returned to a parent/guardian in person.
34	One to One Intervention with outside Agencies	Harm to Pupils Risk of harm due to inadequate supervision of children in school Risk of harm in one-to-one teaching, counselling, coaching situation	Express permission needs to be granted by parents/guardians and principal to carry out work within the school setting.
35	Distance Learning while school is closed for exceptional reasons	Harm to Pupils Risk of harm due to inadequate supervision of children on I.E.Ds (Internet Enabled Devices) for accessing school work. Risk of harm in one-to-one teaching, phone call, counselling or coaching situation	GDPR protection of contacts of the school community-Official Staff Emails to be used to convey school information, planning and resources between teacher. School blog and Aladdin used to communicate with parents and pupils. Teachers will endeavour to check and use reputable websites for assigned work. DES Guidance on Distance Learning HSE Guidelines on Social Distancing Acceptable Use Policy-As per policy, Phone numbers are blocked for contacting pupils
36	Emailing the teacher	Harm to Pupils Risk of harm due to inadequate supervision of children on I.E.Ds (Internet Enabled Devices) for accessing school work. Risk of harm in one-to-one teaching, phone call, counselling or coaching situation	In the event of any long term closures, pupils will use their parents' email accounts to contact their class teacher or SET teacher. The email accounts are as follows: teachermshowley@gmail.com teachermrsmarren@gmail.com teachermrsmulkerrins@gmail.com teachermsmoloney@gmail.com teachermsmullins@gmail.com They may also use this email address to contact the teacher with a question related to work. Two teachers will monitor this email account-Either the Class teachers or the class teacher and SET teacher.

St Thomas' NS Child Protection Statement and Risk Assessment

	List of School Activities	Risks Identified Against Each School Activity	Procedures/Measures in place to Mitigate Risk
37	Implementation of DES and Public Health advice/protocols regarding infectious diseases such as Covid-19, within a local context	Risk of harm (infection) due to infectious diseases such as Covid-19	The school has developed a Covid-19 Policy Statement and plan which has been approved by the Board of Management. Preventative measures have been put in place and protocols implemented at a local school level to minimise the risk of introducing and spreading Covid19. These measures include; hand hygiene, application of respiratory & cough etiquette and environmental hygiene.
38	Supervision of students suspected of having COVID 19	Risk of harm	The school has a supervision protocol for students suspected of having COVID-19
39	lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBT children) - pupils perceived to be LGBT - pupils with minority religious faiths -children in care -children on TUSLA's Child Protection Notification System (CPNS)	• Risk of harm in one-to-one teaching, counselling, coaching situation Risk of isolation or instability in home	• The school complies with the agreed disciplinary procedures for teaching staff The school has a Special Educational Needs policy
40	1. Breakfast club 2. After/School	Risk of injury or harm	Owner of facility communicates compliance with Tusla requirements with school principal
41			
42			
43			

Additional pages may be added as required

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.

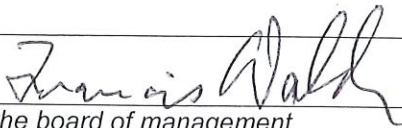
Risk in the context of this Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment is the risk of 'harm' as defined in the Children First Act 2015 and not general health and safety risk. The definition of harm is set out in the Children First Act 2015: 'harm' means, in relation to a child— (a) assault, ill-treatment 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.

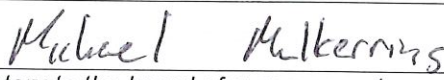
St Thomas' NS Child Protection Statement and Risk Assessment

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 11/10/26 (most recent review date)

Signed:*		Date:	<u>11/10/26</u>
Chairperson of the board of management			

Signed:*		Date:	<u>11/10/26</u>
Principal/Secretary to the board of management			

This Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment is expected to be reviewed again on October 2027 (expected review date)

* Document to be printed and signed with original signatures

Appendix - Location of copies of the Child Protection Procedures and Children First Guidance

This may be in the form of specifying the online location for the procedures (Department of Education and Youth website www.gov.ie/childprotectionschools and/or the school website), providing a link to the Children First National Guidance 2017 [Children First National Guidance 2017.pdf](#), and stating the number and location of hard copies of these procedures available in the school.

www.gov.ie/childprotectionschools

[Children First National Guidance 2017.pdf](#)

www.peterswellschool.ie

