



Child Safeguarding and Risk Assesment

November 2023

Mandatory Template 1: Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment

Child Safeguarding Statement

St Thomas National School is a primary school providing primary education to pupils from Junior Infants to Sixth Class.

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), the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools 2017 and Tusla Guidance on the preparation of Child Safeguarding Statements, the Board of Management of St Thomas NS Peterswell has agreed the Child Safeguarding Statement set out in this document.

- 1 The Board of Management has adopted and will implement fully and without modification the Department's Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools 2017 as part of this overall Child Safeguarding Statement
- 2 The Designated Liaison Person (DLP) is Geraldine Nolan Deputy Principal
- 3 The Deputy Designated Liaison Person (Deputy DLP) is Michael Mulkerins Principal

- 4 The Board of Management recognises that child protection and welfare considerations permeate all aspects of school life and must be reflected in all of the school's policies, procedures, practices and activities. In its policies, procedures, practices and activities, 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 or accidents happening to children and protect workers from the necessity to take unnecessary risks that may leave themselves open to accusations of abuse or neglect;
- develop a practice of openness with parents and encourage parental involvement in the education of their children; and
- fully respect confidentiality requirements in dealing with child protection matters.

The school will also adhere to the above principles in relation to any adult pupil with a special vulnerability.

- 5 The following procedures/measures are in place:

- In relation to any member of staff who is the subject of any investigation (howsoever described) in respect of any act, omission or circumstance in respect of a child attending the school, the school adheres to the relevant procedures set out in Chapter 7 of the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017 and to the relevant agreed disciplinary procedures for school staff which are published on the DE website.
 - In relation to the selection or recruitment of staff and their suitability to work with children, the school adheres 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 available on the DE website.
 - In relation to the provision of information and, where necessary, instruction and training, to staff in respect of the identification of the occurrence of harm (as defined in the 2015 Act) the school-
 - Has provided each member of staff with a copy of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement
 - Ensures all new staff are provided with a copy of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement
 - Encourages staff to avail of relevant training
 - Encourages Board of Management members to avail of relevant training
 - The Board of Management maintains records of all staff and Board member training
 - In relation to reporting of child protection concerns to Tusla, all school personnel are required to adhere to the procedures set out in the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017, including in the case of registered teachers, those in relation to mandated reporting under the Children First Act 2015.
 - In this school the Board has appointed the abovenamed DLP as the "relevant person" (as defined in the Children First Act 2015) to be the first point of contact in respect of the schools child safeguarding statement.
 - All registered teachers employed by the school are mandated persons under the Children First Act 2015.
 - In accordance with the Children First Act 2015 and the Addendum to Children First (2019), the Board 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.
 - The various procedures referred to in this Statement can be accessed via the school's website, the DE website or will be made available on request by the school.
- 6 This statement has been published on the school's website and has been provided to all members of school personnel, the Parents' Association (if any) and the patron. It is
 7 readily accessible to parents and guardians on request. A copy of this Statement will be made available to Tusla and the Department if requested.

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

This Child Safeguarding Statement was adopted by the Board of Management

15/11/23

This Child Safeguarding Statement was reviewed by the Board of Management on

15/11/23

Signed: Francis Dabhi,

Chairperson of Board of Management

Signed: Michael Williams

Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management

Date: 15/11/23

Date: 15/11/23

Child Safeguarding Risk Assessment

Written Assessment of Risk of St Thomas National School Peterswell

In accordance with section 11 of the Children First Act 2015 and with the requirement of Chapter 8 of the *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools (revised 2023)*, the following is the Written Risk Assessment of St Thomas National School

<p>1. List of school activities</p> <p>Training of school personnel in Child Protection matters</p>	<p>2. The school has identified the following risk of harm in respect of its activities –</p> <p>Risk of harm not being recognised or reported promptly</p>	<p>3. The school has the following procedures in place to address the risks of harm identified in this assessment -</p> <p>Child Safeguarding Statement & DES procedures made available to all staff</p> <p>DLP& DDLP to attend PDST face to face training</p> <p>All Staff to view Túsia training module & any other online training offered by PDST</p> <p>BOM records all records of staff and board training</p>
<p>Care of Children with special educational needs, including intimate care needs</p> <p>Toilet areas – Use of toilet/changing facilities in school</p> <p>Curricular Provision in respect of SPHE, RSE, Stay safe.</p>	<p>Risk of harm to a child by school personnel while a child is receiving Intimate care</p> <p>Inappropriate behaviour</p> <p>Risk of harm due to inadequate supervision of children in school</p> <p>Non-teaching of same</p>	<p>Policy on intimate care</p> <p>Usage and supervision policy</p> <p>No child will ever be on their own with a staff member in the toilet.</p> <p>School implements SPHE, RSE, Stay Safe in full BOM signs off on teaching of Stay Safe Programme each year</p>

Daily arrival and dismissal of pupils	Harm from older pupils, unknown adults on the playground	Arrival and dismissal supervised by Teachers
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
Students participating in work experience	Harm by student	Work experience Policy Child Safeguarding Statement. Garda Vetted by Secondary School Code of Behaviour
Student teachers undertaking training placement in school	Harm to pupils	Garda Vetting Code of Conduct Child Safeguarding statement
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
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
Classroom teaching	Risk of harm of emotional abuse by teacher	Child Protection Training Child Safeguarding Statement Code of behaviour
One to one teaching and Counselling	Risk of harm of emotional abuse by teacher	Child Protection Training Child Safeguarding Statement Code of behaviour
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
Outdoor teaching activities	Harm to pupils	SNA policy Garda Vetting Child Protection Training

Sporting 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.	School personnel supervision Child Protection Training Garda Vetting Policy of external service providers
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
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 public may use the pool. Parents are instructed not to enter the dressing area. The exception to this will be made for parents of pupils with complex physical need which require 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 joint party agreement form and provide the Garda Vetting Certificate serial numbers of all instructors working in their service.
School trips involving overseas travel	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.	Recommended ratio of teacher/adult supervision is implemented. (1-10) School personnel undergo child protection training Policy and clear procedures in respect of school outings Code of Behaviour

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
Fundraising events involving pupils	Risk of harm	School personnel supervision Child Protection Training Garda Vetting Code of Behaviour Health & Safety Policy
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
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
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
Care of pupils with specific vulnerabilities/needs such as <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupils from ethnic minorities/migrants • Members of the Traveller community • Lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBT) children • Pupils perceived to be LGBT • Pupils of minority religious faiths 	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

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children in care • Children on CPNS 		
<p>Recruitment of school personnel including -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 <p>Visitors/contractors present during/after school activities</p>	<p>Harm not recognised or properly or promptly reported</p>	<p>Child Safeguarding Statement & DES procedures made available to all staff</p> <p>Staff to view Tusla training module & any other online training offered by PDST</p> <p>Vetting Procedures</p> <p>Policy for Parents / Volunteers</p> <p>Policy on Visiting Contractors</p>
<p>Use of school premises by other organisation during school day</p>	<p>Risk of harm by outside personnel Risk of harm due to lack of knowledge/training Risk of harm due to inadequate Code of Behaviour</p>	<p>Child Protection Training Up to date Code of Behaviour Anti-Bullying Policy Code of Conduct Policy and procedures for external Coaches</p>
<p>Use of school premises after school by other organisations</p>	<p>Risk of harm to pupils</p>	<p>Child Protection Training Garda Vetting</p>
<p>Participation by pupils in religious ceremonies/religious instruction external to the school</p>	<p>Risk of harm due to inadequate code of behaviour</p>	<p>Supervision of school personnel School personnel undergo child protection training Garda Vetting Policy and clear procedures in respect of school outings Code of Behaviour</p>
<p>Use of Information and Communication Technology by pupils in school</p>	<p>Risk of harm - Bullying</p>	<p>ICT Policy Anti-Bullying Policy Code of Behaviour Safer Internet Day</p>

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
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
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 filters websites which have identified as harmful and/or inappropriate. Devices are regularly checked to ensure set to highest blocking standard. Teachers are expected to monitor activity in their classroom. 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 new entrants.
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 is required by a pupil immediately after school, a 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 the device whilst retained in the locked drawer and/or for non-return of the 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 digital recording device switched on at any time in the school, will have it confiscated and will only be returned to a parent/guardian in person.

<p>One to One Intervention with outside Agencies</p>	<p>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</p>	<p>Express permission needs to be granted by parents/guardians and principal to carry out work within the school setting.</p>
<p>Distance Learning while school is closed for exceptional reasons (Covid 19 Virus) and contact with children shut due to Virus – and guiding learning through responsible social distancing</p>	<p>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</p>	<p>GDPR protection of contacts of the school community-Official Staff Emails to be used to convey school information, planning and resources between teachers. Email Etiquette Policy between 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</p>
<p>Emailing the teacher</p>	<p>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</p>	<p>During the COVID-19 closure, pupils will use their parents' email account to contact their class teacher or learning support teacher. The email accounts are as follows: teachermsnolan@gmail.com teachermsmarren@gmail.com teachermmulkerrins@gmail.com teachermsmoloney@gmail.com They may also use this email address to contact the teacher with a question relating to work. Two teachers will monitor this email account-Either the Class teachers or the class teacher and a learning support teacher.</p>
<p>Implementation of DES and Public Health advice/protocols regarding infectious diseases such as Covid-19, within a local context</p>	<p>Risk of harm (infection) due to infectious diseases such as Covid-19</p>	<p>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; physical distancing through increased separation and decreased interaction, hand hygiene, application of respiratory & cough etiquette, and environmental hygiene.</p>
<p>Supervision of students suspected of having COVID 19</p>	<p>Risk of harm</p>	<p>The school has a supervision protocol for students suspected of having COVID-19</p>

The school has a supervision protocol for students suspected of having COVID-19
Dealing with a Suspected Case of COVID-19 – See School COVID-Response Plan for further details

Staff or pupils of St Thomas NS should not attend school if displaying any symptoms of COVID-19. The following outlines how our school will deal with a suspected case that may arise in a school setting.

A designated isolation area has been identified within the school building.

If a staff member/pupil displays symptoms of COVID-19 while at school the following are the procedures to be implemented:

1. If the person with the suspected case is a pupil, the parents/guardians should be contacted immediately;
2. We will isolate the person and have a procedure in place to accompany the individual to the designated isolation area via the isolation route, keeping at least 2m away from the symptomatic person and also making sure that others maintain a distance of at least 2m from the symptomatic person at all times;
3. The isolation area we have identified is kitchen beside PE Hall.
4. Remember that the virus is spread by droplets and is not airborne so physical separation is enough to reduce the risk of spread to others even if they are in the same room;
5. If it is not possible to maintain a distance of 2m a staff member caring for a pupil should wear a face covering or mask. Gloves should not be used as the virus does not pass through skin;
6. Provide a mask for the person presenting with symptoms if one is available. He/she should wear the mask if in a common area with other people or while exiting the premises;
7. Assess whether the individual who is displaying symptoms can immediately be directed to go home/be brought home by parents who will call their doctor and continue self-isolation at home.
8. Facilitate the person presenting with symptoms remaining in isolation if they cannot immediately go home and facilitate them calling their doctor. The individual should avoid touching people, surfaces and objects. Advice should be given to the person presenting with symptoms to cover their mouth and nose with the disposable tissue provided when they cough or sneeze and put the tissue in the waste bag provided;
9. If the person is well enough to go home, arrange for them to be transported home by a family member, as soon as possible and advise them to inform their general practitioner by phone of their symptoms. Public transport of any kind should not be used;
10. If a pupil with suspected case of Covid-19 has a sibling attending the school, arrangements will be made for him go home as well;
11. If they are too unwell to go home or advice is required, contact 999 or 112 and inform them that the sick person is a Covid-19 suspect;
12. Carry out an assessment of the incident which will form part of determining follow-up actions and recovery
13. Arrange for appropriate cleaning of the isolation area and work areas involved
14. The HSE will inform any staff/parents who have come into close contact with a diagnosed case via the contact tracing process. The HSE will contact all relevant persons where a diagnosis of COVID-19 is made. The instructions of the HSE should be followed and staff and pupil confidentiality is essential at all times.

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

All school personnel are provided with a copy of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement

The Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017 are made available to all school personnel

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*

The school implements in full the SPHE curriculum

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*

The school has a yard/playground **Supervision Policy** to ensure appropriate supervision of children during, assembly, dismissal and breaks and in respect of specific areas such as toilets, changing rooms etc.

The school has in place a policy and clear procedures in respect of school outings

The school has a **Health and Safety Policy**

The school adheres to the requirements of the **Garda Vetting Legislation** and relevant DES circulars in relation to recruitment and Garda vetting

The school complies with the agreed disciplinary procedures for teaching staff

The school has a **Special Educational Needs policy**

The school –

- o Has provided each member of school staff with a copy of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement
- o Ensures all new staff are provided with a copy of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement
- o Encourages staff to avail of relevant training
- o Encourages board of management members to avail of relevant training
- o Maintains records of all staff and board member training

The school has in place a policy and procedures for the administration of **First Aid** .

The school has in place a **Code of Behaviour** for pupils

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

The school has in place a **Mobile Phone Policy** in respect of usage of mobile phones by pupils

The school has in place a **Critical Incident Management Plan**

The School has in place a **Covid-19 Response Plan & a Covid-19 Policy Statement**

The school has in place a policy and procedures for the use of **external sports coaches**

The school has in place a policy and procedures for **one-to-one counselling**

The school has in place a policy and procedures in respect of **student teacher placements**

The school has a policy and procedures in respect of pupils of the school undertaking **work experience in external organisations**

Distance Learning

In facilitating access to safe communication between St Thomas NS and pupils, St Thomas NS extends the opportunity to learn via Google Classroom. In providing these opportunities, we commit to adhering to the following best practices in the interest of safeguarding both students and staff.

Child Protection Concerns Related to Distance Learning

Communicating with students over the internet raises the following concerns in relation to child protection:

The situation introduces the student to the idea of communicating with an adult that is not part of their family group over the internet. This is not a practice that should come to be considered normal by the student and it should be emphasised by parents that communicating in this manner is something that requires permission and supervision;

This method of communication invites the teacher/SNA into the student's home, and vice versa, without being physically present and, therefore, possibly unknown to other members of either household. There should be an awareness on behalf of all involved that there is someone virtually present in their home and that everyone's actions need to be reflected in this.

St Thomas NS staff undertake as part of our Child Protection Policy to report any concerns over child welfare to Geraldine Nolan Deputy Principal who is the Designated Liaison Person or in her absence to Michael Mulkerrens (Principal and Deputy Liaison Person)

Parental Consent

Written parental consent shall be sought for the purposes of:

Engaging with the pupil in their home via live video calls (Google Meet/Zoom)

Parental consent will be sought using Email Consent.

Location and Supervision of Lessons

All calls should be held in an area of the home that is open and accessible to the parents of the student. Lessons should not, for instance, take place in a room with a closed door without parental/guardian's supervision.

Teachers/SNA should hold the video call in a location that respects the privacy of the pupils learning.

Lessons will, however, need to be held in an area where student and staff members can concentrate on the call and not be unnecessarily interrupted. This may be hard to balance with younger children in the house and may take a few sessions to establish a good routine. All concerned need to show some patience in forming a routine and be willing to discuss ways to improve concentration during

All one to one calls require a parent/guardian to be present during the video.

Parents are responsible for the supervision of their child during the video call.

No lessons are permitted to be recorded by any pupils

If a class teacher wishes to record a lesson online prior consent will be sought from parents.

Time Keeping

- All parties will login on time for a video call.
- If any party is delayed or unable to attend video call they should make prior contact to discuss with other party where possible.
- Staff will end non-attended calls 10 minutes after start time.

Alternative Contact Methods

All arrangements / re-arrangements to lessons must be made through a parent and teacher using email or phone call.

Students and staff members are only allowed to communicate using Google Classroom and Zoom .

Google Classroom is used to engage in school activities.

Teachers/SNAs will endeavour to respond to messages during school hours. Any messages received after these hours may be responded to the following school day.

Pupils may request help or clarifications using this method of communication.

Pupils may submit schoolwork via Google Classroom.

Teachers will provide feedback to pupil via Google Classroom.

If parents wish to raise any concerns or discuss anything with teacher/SNA they must use teacher email or stthomasns.ias@eircom.net email or request that the teacher phone them to discuss the issues.

Boundaries Professional Distance

While encouraging and fostering a positive relationship with learners, all St Thomas NS staff must retain a sense of themselves as 'professionals' and, thus, maintain a professional distance with learners and parents in both the workplace and while working with pupils on G Suite or Zoom. Staff members should

ensure that they do not place themselves in situations where learners have undue expectations of a staff member's ability to resolve conflicts or personal issues. Pupils and parents themselves have a responsibility to recognise the 'professional' nature of their relationship with a staff member and hence not hold undue expectations of how staff should relate to them in the workplace or online.

Grounds for Concern

The grounds for concern laid out in the St Thomas NS Child Protection Policy shall apply in all lessons given over the internet and shall apply to all children in the student's home. If a staff member witnesses any concerning issues during the video call they must report these to Designated Liaison Person in accordance with the Child Protection Guidelines. This includes things that happen in the background or off-camera.

If a parent has any concerns about the process or relationship between student and staff member, they should contact Geraldine Nolan, the Designated Liaison Person to discuss the situation. St Thomas NS undertakes to investigate all complaints or concerns regarding its teaching staff in line with our Child Protection Policy.

Raising Concerns

Concerns for the welfare of students will be dealt with in line with the St Thomas NS Child Protection Policy.

Recording of Lessons

No recordings are to be made of lessons, without the explicit consent of both teacher and parent/guardian.

Record Keeping

- Teacher will share an agenda with pupils prior to the Google Meet/Zoom call
- Teacher will have a scheduled call time
 - o Time & Date
 - o Consent received
 - o Duration
 - o Topics discussed
 - o Any concerns

General Code of Conduct

All participants in Distance Learning must agree to:

- Treat all users, educators and colleagues fairly and equally. Stimulate conversation, be respectful of others' views, and refrain from personal
- Respect the legitimate intellectual property rights, do not plagiarise work, and give credit to the originators of ideas.
- Not share the posts of others

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. The definition of harm is set out in Chapter 4 of the *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools (revised 2023)*

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.

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. 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 (1) identify, as required under the Children First Act, 2015, any risks of harm that may exist in respect of the school’s activities, (2) identify and assess the adequacy of the various procedures already in place to manage those risks of harm and (3) identify and put in place any such additional procedures as are considered necessary to manage any risk identified.

The Addendum to Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 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.

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.

Examples of School Activities

- Daily arrival and dismissal of pupils
- Recreation breaks for pupils
- Classroom teaching
- One-to-one teaching
- One-to one learning support
- One-to-one counselling
- Outdoor teaching activities
- Online teaching and learning remotely

- Sporting Activities
- School outings
- School trips involving overnight stay
- School trips involving foreign travel
- Use of toilet/changing/shower areas in schools
- Provision of residential facilities for boarders
- Annual Sports Day
- Fundraising events involving pupils
- Use of off-site facilities for school activities
- School transport arrangements including use of bus escorts
- Care of children with special educational needs, including intimate care where needed,
- Care of any vulnerable adult students, including intimate care where needed
- Management of challenging behaviour amongst pupils, including appropriate use of restraint where required
- Management of provision of food and drink
- Administration of Medicine
- Administration of First Aid
- Curricular provision in respect of SPHE, RSE, Stay Safe
- Prevention and dealing with bullying amongst pupils
- Training of school personnel in child protection matters
- Use of external personnel to supplement curriculum
- Use of external personnel to support sports and other extra-curricular activities
- 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
 - Pupils perceived to be LGBT
 - Pupils of minority religious faiths
 - Children in care
 - Children on CPNS

- Children with medical needs
- 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
- Participation by pupils in religious ceremonies/religious instruction external to the school
- Use of Information and Communication Technology by pupils in school, including social media
- Application of sanctions under the school's Code of Behaviour including detention of pupils, confiscation of phones etc.
- Students participating in work experience in the school
- Students from the school participating in work experience elsewhere
- Student teachers undertaking training placement in school
- Use of video/photography/other media to record school events
- After school use of school premises by other organisations
- Use of school premises by other organisation during school day
- Breakfast club
- Homework club/evening study

Examples of Risks of Harm

- Risk of harm not being recognised by school personnel
- Risk of harm 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 in the school by another child
- Risk of child being harmed in the school by volunteer or visitor to the school
- 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 out of school activities e.g. school trip, swimming lessons

- Risk of harm due to inappropriate use of online remote teaching and learning communication platform such as an uninvited person accessing the lesson link, students being left unsupervised for long periods of time in breakout rooms
- Risk of harm due to bullying of child
- Risk of harm due to racism
- 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, including medical 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 an 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

Examples of Procedures to address risks of harm

- All school personnel are provided with a copy of the school's *Child Safeguarding Statement*
- The *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017* are made available to all school personnel
- 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* and its Addendum (2019)
- The school implements in full the Stay Safe Programme
- The school implements in full the SPHE curriculum
- The school implements in full the Wellbeing Programme at Junior Cycle

- 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*
- The school undertakes anti-racism awareness initiatives
- The school has a yard/playground supervision policy to ensure appropriate supervision of children during, assembly, dismissal and breaks and in respect of specific areas such as toilets, changing rooms etc.
- The school has in place a policy and clear procedures in respect of school outings
- The school has a Health and safety policy
- The school adheres to the requirements of the Garda vetting legislation and relevant DE circulars in relation to recruitment and Garda vetting
- The school has a codes of conduct for school personnel (teaching and non-teaching staff)
- 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
- The school has in place a policy and procedures for the administration of medication to pupils
- The school –
 - Has provided each member of school staff with a copy of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement
 - Ensures all new staff are provided with a copy of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement
 - Encourages staff to avail of relevant training
 - Encourages board of management members to avail of relevant training
 - Maintains records of all staff and board member training
- The school has in place a policy and procedures for the administration of First Aid
- The school has in place a code of behaviour for pupils
- The school has an Acceptable Use Policy in place, to include provision for online teaching and learning remotely, and has communicated this policy to parents
- The school has in place a policy governing the use of smart phones and tables devices in the school by pupils as per circular 38/2018
- The school has in place a Critical Incident Management Plan
- The school has in place a policy and procedures for the use of external persons to supplement delivery of the curriculum
- The school has in place a policy and procedures for the use of external sports coaches
- The school has in place a policy and clear procedures for one-to-one teaching activities
- The school has in place a policy and procedures for one-to-one counselling

- The school has in place a policy and procedures in respect of student teacher placements
- The school has in place a policy and procedures in respect of students undertaking work experience in the school
- The school has in place a policy and procedures in respect of pupils of the school undertaking work experience in external organisations