

## Mandatory Template 1: Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment Template (Landscape Version)

### Child Safeguarding Statement

St Thomas NS 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 \(revised 2023\)](#) and [Tusla Guidance on the preparation of Child Safeguarding Statements](#), the Board of Management of St Thomas NS 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 (revised (2023))* as part of this overall Child Safeguarding Statement
- 2 The Designated Liaison Person (DLP) is Ger Nolan
- 3 The Deputy Designated Liaison Person (Deputy DLP) is Michael Mulkerrins
- 4 The Relevant Person is Ger Nolan  
(The relevant person is one who can provide information in respect of how the child safeguarding statement was developed and will be able to provide the statement on request. In a school setting the relevant person shall be the designated liaison person.)
- 5 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.

6 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 (revised 2023)* and to the relevant agreed disciplinary procedures for school staff which are published on the [gov.ie](https://www.gov.ie) 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](https://www.gov.ie) 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 [gov.ie](https://www.gov.ie) 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 (revised 2023)*, including in the case of registered teachers, those in relation to mandated reporting under the Children First Act 2015.
- 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 [gov.ie](http://gov.ie) website or will be made available on request by the school.

**Note:** The above is not intended as an exhaustive list. Individual Boards of Management shall also include in this section such other procedures/measures that are of relevance to the school in question.

- 7 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 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 on 22/10/24 [date].

This Child Safeguarding Statement was reviewed by the Board of Management on 22/10/24 [most recent review date].

Signed: Francis Wabih

Chairperson of Board of Management

Signed: Michael Mulken

Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management

Date: 22/10/24

Date: 22/10/24



## Child Safeguarding Risk Assessment

### Written Assessment of Risk of [name of school]

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 PostPrimary Schools (revised 2023)*, the following is the Written Risk Assessment of St Thomas NS.

1. List of school activities	2. The school has identified the following risk of harm in respect of its activities –	3. The school has the following procedures in place to address the risks of harm identified in this assessment -
Training of school personnel in Child Protection matters	Risk of harm not being recognised or reported promptly	<p>Child Safeguarding Statement &amp; DES procedures made available to all staff</p> <p>DLP&amp; DDLP to attend PDST face to face training All Staff to view Túsla training module &amp; any other online training offered by PDST</p> <p>BOM records all records of staff and board training</p>
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
Toilet areas – Use of toilet/changing facilities in school	<p>Inappropriate behaviour</p> <p>Risk of harm due to inadequate supervision of children in school</p>	<p>Usage and supervision policy</p> <p>No child will ever be on their own with a staff member in the toilet.</p>

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
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



		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"> <li>Pupils from ethnic minorities/migrants</li> <li>Members of the Traveller community</li> <li>Lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBT) children</li> </ul>	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"> <li>• Pupils perceived to be LGBT</li> <li>• Pupils of minority religious faiths</li> <li>• Children in care</li> <li>• Children on CPNS</li> </ul>		
<p>Recruitment of school personnel including -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teachers</li> <li>• SNA's</li> <li>• Caretaker/Secretary/Cleaners</li> <li>• Sports coaches</li> <li>• External Tutors/Guest Speakers</li> <li>• Volunteers/Parents in school activities</li> <li>• Visitors/contractors present in school during school hours</li> </ul> <p>Visitors/contractors present during/after school activities</p>	Harm not recognised or properly or promptly reported	<p>Child Safeguarding Statement &amp; DES procedures made available to all staff</p> <p>Staff to view Tusla training module &amp; any other online training offered by PDST</p> <p>Vetting Procedures</p> <p>Policy for Parents / Volunteers</p> <p>Policy on Visiting Contractors</p>
Use of school premises by other organisation during school day	<p>Risk of harm by outside personnel</p> <p>Risk of harm due to lack of knowledge/training</p> <p>Risk of harm due to inadequate Code of Behaviour</p>	<p>Child Protection Training</p> <p>Up to date Code of Behaviour</p> <p>Anti-Bullying Policy</p> <p>Code of Conduct</p> <p>Policy and procedures for external Coaches</p>
Use of school premises after school by other organisations	Risk of harm to pupils	<p>Child Protection Training</p> <p>Garda Vetting</p>
Participation by pupils in religious ceremonies/religious instruction external to the school	Risk of harm due to inadequate code of behaviour	<p>Supervision of school personnel</p> <p>School personnel undergo child protection training</p> <p>Garda Vetting Policy and clear procedures in respect of school outings</p> <p>Code of Behaviour</p>
Use of Information and Communication Technology by pupils in school	Risk of harm - Bullying	<p>ICT Policy</p> <p>Anti-Bullying Policy</p>



		Code of Behaviour Safer Internet Day
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. <b>Acceptable Use Policy</b> 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.
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.
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 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
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 account to contact their class teacher or learning support teacher. The email accounts are as follows: <a href="mailto:teachermsnolan@gmail.com">teachermsnolan@gmail.com</a> <a href="mailto:teachermrsmarren@gmail.com">teachermrsmarren@gmail.com</a> <a href="mailto:teachermrmulkerrins@gmail.com">teachermrmulkerrins@gmail.com</a> <a href="mailto:teachermsmoloney@gmail.com">teachermsmoloney@gmail.com</a> 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.
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.
Supervision of students suspected of having COVID 19	Risk of harm	The school has a supervision protocol for students suspected of having <b>COVID-19</b>
<b>Important Note:</b> 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 <i>Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools (revised 2023)</i>		

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.

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)*.

### **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 Tusla's Child Protection Notification System (CPNS)
  - Children with medical needs
- Recruitment of school personnel including -
  - Teachers/SNAs
  - 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 (revised 2023)* are made available to all school personnel
- School Personnel are required to adhere to the *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools (revised 2023)* 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 Home School Liaison policy and related procedures
- 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