

Mandatory Template 1: Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment Template

Child Safeguarding Statement

St. Patrick's N.S. 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. Patrick's N.S. 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 Carmel Thorpe (Principal).
- 3 The Deputy Designated Liaison Person (Deputy DLP) is Neasa Ní Mháirtín (Deputy Principal).
- 4 The Relevant Person is Carmel Thorpe
(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 PostPrimary Schools (revised 2023)* and to the relevant agreed disciplinary procedures for school staff which are published on the 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 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 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 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 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 14/03/2024

This Child Safeguarding Statement was reviewed by the Board of Management on 14/03/2024

Signed: Siamsu Ó hÉanaigh
Chairperson of Board of Management

Signed: Comel Anon
Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management

Date: 14/3/2024

Date: 14/03/2024

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 requirements 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. Patrick's N.S.

1. List 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
- Engaging in sport's events / training on school grounds
- Attending sporting events outside of school e.g. GAA, soccer blitz, athletics competitions, Patricia Smyth Memorial Blitz Day
- School outings
- Use of toilet/changing areas in schools
- Swimming lessons and changing facilities (Male/Female & supervisors)
- Visit to the school by the Parish N.E.T. Team for Religious preparation/support
- Confession in school
- School Concert – Seachtain na Gaeilge & Christmas Concert (General Admittance – and access by the children to parents & others)
- Annual Sports Day
- Fundraising events involving pupils
- Use of off-site facilities for school activities
- School transport arrangements
- Transport – use of staff & parents' cars
- Preparation for Religious Ceremonies – lifts to the church
- Early entry to school on wet days
- Supervision during wet days for break times
- Accidents on yards – roles of responsibilities
- Care of children with special educational needs, 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
- 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
- TY students must be Garda vetted
- 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
- Homework club/evening study
- Access to phone through the school (some areas have no coverage for land line and mobile coverage can drop inside the school building)

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

- 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
- Risk of harm children arriving to school late
- Risk of harm children leaving school early

3. 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 PostPrimary Schools (revised 2023)* are made available to all school personnel
- School Personnel are required to adhere to the *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and PostPrimary 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 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 complies with the agreed disciplinary procedures for teaching staff
- The school has in place a policy and clear procedures for one-to-one teaching activities this is included in Special Educational Needs policy; one-to-one teaching: SEN and other teachers are careful to ensure procedures are in place, such as open door, glass window to ensure visibility, table between teacher and pupil, and teachers adhere to the Child Protection procedures for primary and post-primary schools 2017
- 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 – included in the Health and Safety Policy
- 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 Critical Incident Management Plan
- 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
- Appended Policies to the Child Safeguarding Policy are:
 - - Intimate Care Needs Policy
 - - Administration of Medicines Policy
 - - Internet safety and Acceptable Use Policy
 - - Students on Work Placement and Work Experience
 - - Remote Learning Policy
 - - Anti-Bullying Policy
- Yard Supervision Rota is devised and supervised by Carmel Thorpe.
- Pupils are not allowed to have mobile phones in school.
- The school will continue to organise Internet Safety Workshops for pupils and parents regularly.
- Classes given by outside coaches are supervised by the class teacher at all times and a copy of the coach’s Garda Vetting is given to the Principal/DLP.

Procedures to Address Risks of Harm Identified in Section 1

Risk of harm not being recognised

a. All teachers have received child protection training. Teachers and staff are encouraged to continuously monitor and report to the DLP any concern no matter how insignificant they feel it may be.

Risk of harm from school personnel

a. All teachers, staff, volunteers, work experience students and outside coaches are all Garda vetted to ensure safety for children.

Risk of harm by another child

a. Children have separate toilets and changing areas. Areas for break times are designated for junior and senior pupils separately. Children are not allowed to move around the school unsupervised during class time or break times. Teachers and SNA staff supervise the yard each day and in the classrooms on wet days.

Risk of harm to children with SEN, vulnerable children with intimate care needs and others

a. All teachers and staff follow policies and procedures which lays out very clearly 'good practice' and appropriate interactions with children

Risk of harm due to exposure to inappropriate images via the internet

a. The school's Acceptable Use Policy is followed correctly at all times. Internet access is limited to appropriate sites (blocks in place) and is always monitored by teachers.

Arrival of Children in the morning:

a. Children are greeted at the gate by Carmel Thorpe or whatever teacher is on duty, they then proceed to the shelter shed. They are supervised by Carmel Thorpe or the supervising teacher that morning from 9.10am – 9.20am. They then line up and walk to their classroom. On very wet days the children are brought straight to their classrooms.

Dismissal from school in the evenings

a. The teacher accompanies children to the gate and waits until their parents have collected them. If the child is not collected they return to the school building and wait there until the parent arrives. The teacher will seek another teacher/SNA to stay with them while waiting.

Toileting and Accidents

a. Intimate Care Needs Policy in place and will be followed accordingly.

All class toilet areas are outside the classroom

- a. Teachers ensure that only one child uses the toilet at any given time.
- b. When needed, SNA staff support pupils with care needs.

Yard supervision and Toilet Usage by pupils

- a. Children are encouraged to use the toilet before they go to the yard.
- b. If a child needs to go to the toilet, they ask the teacher's permission to leave the yard.
- c. Junior students and children with SEN are accompanied by the SNA when leaving the yard.

Attending events outside of the school premises

Where pupils attend events outside the school premises, adequate supervision will be

provided by teachers, SNAs and parents where appropriate

Holding sports events on site

- a. List to include all adults who will be attending with schools.
- b. Each school will be responsible for ensuring that relevant Garda Vetting of all adults is in place for their school.
- c. Each school will be responsible for the supervision of their own children.

School Sports Day and Blitz or games

- a. Letter to clarify to parents that same rules apply regarding safety and discipline
- b. Supervision to be provided by teachers and staff due to access by general public (largely relatives and family friends of pupils).

Visiting Coaches – sports/other

- a. A copy of Garda Vetting must be given to the school Principal/DLP.
- b. Class teachers will remain with the class at all times.

TY Students

- a. Must be Garda Vetted from their own school as per guidelines and must be over 16 yrs of age.

Teaching Practice Students

- a. Must be Garda Vetted from Colleges of Education and have all documentation before they can commence Teaching Practice in the school.

Preparation for Religious Ceremonies

- a. Lifts/ Bus: Letter to parents regarding safety and child protection in terms of transport to the Church or other venue. Parents are encouraged to bring their own child where possible.

Children leaving for Appointments

- a. Parents must sign their child out (sign out book is in the school office).

Risk of harm not being recognised by school personnel

- a. Teachers will record all minor incidents and these are to be reviewed with the DLP regularly.

Risk of harm not being reported properly and promptly by school personnel

- teachers must report all signs of possible abuse (no matter how minor they may deem it to be) to the DLP.

Risk of child being harmed in the school by a member of school personnel

- a. Child protection is addressed at the beginning of each school term during Croke Park hours. Each staff member has a copy of the 'Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary schools, 2023'.

Risk of a child being harmed in the school by another child

– Consistent and vigilant supervision by teachers and staff will minimise the opportunities whereby a child can be harmed by another child. Should such harm take place, the disclosure of harm will be dealt with by following child protection procedures fully and may warrant a referral or mandated report to TUSLA.

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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.