

CHILD SAFEGUARDING STATEMENT and RISK ASSESSMENT

ST. MARY'S SAFEGUARDING STATEMENT

St. Mary's is a primary school providing primary/post-primary education to pupils from ASD Pre-School 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. Mary'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: Bernie McVeigh
- 3 The Deputy Designated Liaison Person (Deputy DLP is: Andrew Whitney)
- 4 The Relevant Person is (DLP) Bernie McVeigh
- 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 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
- 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.
- 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 at its meeting on 27th September 2023.

Signed: Barbara Anne J Gallagher 27/9/23

Chairperson of Board of Management

Signed: Donna McVeigh

Secretary of Board of Management

CHILD SAFEGUARDING RISK ASSESSMENT

Written Assessment of Risk of St. Mary's Primary 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. Mary's Primary School

1. List of school activities

- Daily arrival and dismissal of pupils
- Breakfast Club
- Recreation / Yard breaks for pupils
- Classroom teaching
- One-to-one teaching
- Outdoor teaching activities (e.g.) Science /Nature Walks, Maths Trails
- Dance/ Drama Class in Mullingar Arts Centre
- Sporting Activities
- School tours / school outing
- Use of toilet area in school
- Annual events: Fun Days, Christmas Activities, Sports Day
- Fundraising events involving pupils e.g. Lá Glas /Cake Sale / Raffles
- Use of off-site facilities for school activities - e.g. tennis/swimming/library
- Care of children with special educational needs, including intimate care where needed
- 3 Pre-School ASD units
- Management of challenging behaviour amongst pupils, including appropriate use of CPI as required
- Management of provision of food and drink
- Administration of First Aid / Medicine
- Curricular provision in respect of SPHE, RSE, Stay Safe
- Prevention and dealing with bullying amongst pupils
- Training of school personnel in child protection matters
- External visitors - musicians/Health Nurse/Junior Achievement
- Use of external personnel to support PE e.g. dance teacher/ GAA coaching
- Care of pupils with specific vulnerabilities/ needs such as
 - Pupils from ethnic minorities/migrants
 - Pupils perceived to be LGBT
 - Members of the Traveller community
 - Pupils of minority religious faiths
 - Children in care
 - Children on Tusla's child Protection Notification System (CPNS)
 - Children with medical needs
- Recruitment of school staff:
 - Teachers/SNA's
 - Caretaker/Secretary/Cleaners
 - Sports Coaches
 - External Tutors/Guest Speakers
 - Visitors/contractors present in school during school hours
 - Visitors/contractors present during after school activities
- Participation by pupils in religious ceremonies e.g. Confirmation/Mass
- Use of ICT by pupils in school, including social media

- Application of sanctions under the school's Code of Behaviour
- Students participating in work experience in the school
- Student teachers undertaking training placement in school
- Student SNAs undertaking work experience in the school
- Students from third level colleges undertaking work placement in the school
- Use of video/photography/other media to record school events
- After school use of school premises by other organisations
- After school extra-curricular activities
- Homework Club

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 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 bullying of child
- Risk of harm due to inadequate supervision of children in school
- Risk of harm due to inadequate supervision of children while attending out of school activities
- Risk of harm due to inappropriate relationship/communications between child and another child or adult
- Risk of harm due to children inappropriately accessing/using computers, social media, phones and other devices while at school
- Risk of harm to children with SEN who have particular vulnerabilities
- Risk of harm to child while a child is receiving intimate care
- Risk of harm due to inadequate code of behaviour
- Risk of harm in one-to-one teaching, coaching situation
- Risk of harm caused by member of school personnel communicating with pupils in inappropriate manner via social media, texting, digital device or other manner
- Risk of harm caused by member of school personnel accessing/circulating inappropriate material via social media, texting, digital device or other manner
- Risk of harm due to breach of GDPR
- Risk of harm entering the school campus with one entrance for pedestrians and vehicles.
- Risk of harm to child while accessing toilets.
- Risk of harm to child due to inaccessibility to appropriate medication
- Risk of harm due to other schools using school facilities

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 Post-Primary Schools 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 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 has a yard/playground supervision policy to ensure appropriate supervision of children during assembly, dismissal and breaks
- 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 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 code of behaviour for pupils
- The school has in place a policy and procedure for the administration of First Aid
- 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 tablet devices in the school by pupils as per circular 38/2018(Acceptable use policy)
- The school has in place a Critical Incident Management Plan
- The school has an intimate care policy/plan in respect of students who require such care
- 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 (SEN Policy)
- The school has in place a policy and procedures for one-to-one counselling. (SCP)

- 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

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.

Mandatory Template 3: Notification regarding the Board of Management's review of the Child Safeguarding Statement

To: Parents of children / Guardians of Children

The Board of Management of St Marys wishes to inform you that:

- The Board of Management's annual review of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement was completed at the Board meeting of 27/9/2023 [date].
- This review was conducted in accordance with the "Checklist for Review of the Child Safeguarding Statement" published on the [gov.ie](https://www.gov.ie) website

Signed Barbara Anne O'Callaghan Date 27/9/23

Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed Bernie McVeigh Date 27/9/2023

Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management