

St. Mary's NS, Knockbridge



Child Safeguarding Statement

St. Marys NS., Knockbridge 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 Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools 2017 and Túsla Guidance on the preparation of Child Safeguarding Statements, the Board of Management of St. Marys 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 2017 as part of this overall Child Safeguarding Statement
2. The Designated Liaison Person (DLP) is **Mr. Brian McDonnell**
3. The Deputy Designated Liaison Person (Deputy DLP) is **Mrs. Aisling Farren**
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 DES 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 DES and available on the DES 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 above named DLP as the "relevant person" (as defined in the Children First Act 2015) to be the first point of contact in respect of the 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, 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 attached as an appendix to this statement.

The various procedures referred to in this Statement can be accessed via the school's website, the DES 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 as well as the Parents' & Friends 'Association and the school patron. It is readily accessible to parents and guardians on request. A copy of this Statement will be made available to Túsia 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 on 9th March 2023

This Child Safeguarding Statement was reviewed by the Board of Management on 9th March 2023

Signed: Helen King
Helen King, Chairperson BOM

Date: 9/3/23

Signed: Brian McDonnell
Brian McDonnell, School Principal

Date: 9/3/23

Child Safeguarding Risk Assessment of St. Mary's N.S., Knockbridge

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 2017*, the following is the Written Risk Assessment of St. Marys NS., Knockbridge, Co. Louth.

1. List of school activities

- Daily arrival and dismissal of pupils
- Recreation breaks for pupils
- Classroom teaching
- One-to-one teaching/counselling
- Outdoor teaching activities
- Online/Remote teaching and learning
- Sporting Activities and outdoor activities
- Use of toilet/changing/shower areas in schools or on school outings
- Annual Sports Day
- Fundraising events involving pupils
- Use of off-site facilities for school activities
- School transport arrangements
- Care of children with special educational needs, including intimate care where needed
- Care of pupils isolating due to symptoms of Covid 19
- Management of challenging behaviour amongst pupils, including appropriate use of restraint where required
- Administration of Medicine and 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 school & external personnel to support sports and 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
- 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 & after school hours
 - 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 separation and detention of pupils etc.
- Students participating in work experience in the school
- Student teachers undertaking training placement in school
- Use of video/photography/other media to record school events
- Use of school premises by other organisations e.g. sports clubs, Fitkids, homework club
- Use of school premises by other organisation during school day e.g. HSE

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

- 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 ,being transported to school events
- 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 due to children inappropriately accessing/using computers, social media, phones and other devices while at home through online/remote learning
- 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
- Risk of harm to a child while isolating due to symptoms of Covid 19
- Risk of harm caused by a member of the school personnel communicating with pupils in an inappropriate manner via social media, texting, digital device or other manner
- Risk of harm caused by a member of school personnel accessing/circulating inappropriate material via social media, texting, digital device or other manner

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

- The school:
 - Has provided each member of the 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*
 - Has made the *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017* available to all school personnel
 - Expects and encourages staff to avail of relevant training
 - Expects and encourages board of management members to avail of relevant training
 - Maintains records of all staff and board member training
- 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 adheres to the requirements of the Garda vetting legislation and relevant DES circulars in relation to recruitment and Garda vetting
- The school implements in full the Stay Safe, SPHE and RSE Programme
- 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 areas etc.
- The school has a Health and Safety policy (Safety Statement)
- The school has 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 an intimate care policy/plan in respect of students who require such care

- The school has policies and procedures in place for the administration of medication and first aid
- 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 code of behaviour for pupils
- The school has in place an ICT policy in respect of acceptable usage of ICT by pupils at school
- The school has in place a policy in respect of online/remote teaching and learning
- The school has in place a mobile phone/smart device policy
- The school has in place a Critical Incident Management Plan
- The school has a Special Educational Needs policy
- The school has in place a policy and clear procedures for one-to-one teaching activities
- The school has in place procedures in respect of school outings & tours
- The school has procedures in place for the use of external persons to supplement delivery of the curriculum
- The school has procedures in place with regard to outside organisations/agencies using the school premises for their own purposes out of school time
- The school has procedures in place with regards to student teacher placements
- The school has procedures in place with regard to the transportation of pupils to school outings by school staff and parents
- The school has procedures in place with regard to access to the school building for visitors, parents and non-vetted staff

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 2017.

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.

This risk assessment has been completed by the Board of Management on 9th March 2023.

It shall be reviewed as part of the school’s annual review of its Child Safeguarding Statement.

Signed: Adrian King

Date: 9/3/23

Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed: [Signature]

Date: 9/3/23

Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management