



# Our Lady of Mercy Senior Primary School

## SCOIL MHIURE NA TRÓCAIRE

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### Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment

Our Lady of Mercy SNS is a primary school providing primary education to pupils from Third Class 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 \(revised 2023\)](#), [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 Our Lady of Mercy SNS 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 Mairéad Cummins**
3. The Deputy Designated Liaison Person (Deputy DLP) is Hilary Mc Carthy
4. **The relevant person is Mairéad Cummins.**
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.

1 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 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 (revised 2023), 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.
- 2 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.
- 3 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 3.10.2024

This Child Safeguarding Statement was reviewed by the Board of Management on 3.10.2024

Signed: Seán Dower

Chairperson of Board of Management

Date: 3.10.24

Signed: Mairéad Cummins

Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management

Date: 3.10.24

## Child Safeguarding Risk Assessment

### Written Assessment of Risk of Our Lady Of Mercy SNS

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 Our NS.

#### 1. List of school activities

Opening/Closing Times and Break Times
Opening/Closing Times of Pre-School

Hosting Visitors/Visiting Tutors/Students  
One to one teaching  
One to one Play Therapy  
Administration of First Aid  
Administration of Medicine  
Curricular provision in respect of SPHE, RSE, Stay Safe.  
Homework Club  
Provision of school meals  
School Tours/Outings/School Transport Arrangements e.g. Bus Escorts/Drivers  
Access/Egress  
Recruitment of School Personnel  
Swimming Lessons/Sports Events  
Care of pupils with SEN, including intimate care where necessary.  
Summer Camp for target pupils  
Use of ICT by pupils and staff  
Remote teaching and learning  
Use of video/photography/other media to record school events

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

Access to pupils by strangers or other adults.  
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 from other pupils  
Tutors behaving inappropriately.  
Tutors lacking awareness of child safety issues.  
Inappropriate activity by pupils/adults.  
Inadequate supervision.  
Inadequate Code of Behaviour.  
Dangers posed by unfamiliar environment  
Flight risk for some pupils  
Harm not recognised or properly or promptly reported.  
Potential for unsupervised times in changing areas.  
Risk of harm when child is receiving intimate care.  
Potential for bullying.  
Potential for grooming of pupils  
Exposure to inappropriate online content

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

Child Safeguarding Statement (as per DES procedures) provided to all school personnel.

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)*. Parents made aware school has no responsibility for supervision of pupils before 8.30 a.m.

Supervision Policy to ensure appropriate supervision of children.

High visibility vests worn by supervising adults.

Special Educational Needs Policy.

Health and Safety Policy.

Stay Safe Programme implemented in full.

SPHE curriculum implemented in full.

Intimate Care Policy.

Visitors Sign in/out Book.

Appropriate vetting i.e. the school adheres to the requirements of the Garda vetting legislation and relevant DES circulars in relation to recruitment and Garda vetting.

Glass panels in doors.

Door remains open when only one tutor present.

Ratio of Adults to pupils for offsite activities: for 3<sup>rd</sup> -6<sup>th</sup> Classes - 1:15.

Adequate planning and preparation by staff.

School Tour procedures followed.

Escorts/Drivers with appropriate vetting.

All exit doors locked at 9.10 a.m.

Gates closed at break time.

Buzzer system on main door.

Keypads fitted on external exit doors.

Relevant staff training.

Trained lifeguards in pool.

Teaching Practice Policy.

Mobile Phone Policy.

Critical Incident Management Plan.

Anti-Bullying Policy.

ICT Policy.

Information sessions for pupils, parents and staff.

Code of Behaviour.

Adherence to relevant public health guidelines.

School: Filtering of online content (PDST).

Managed iPads in school.

Supervision by class teachers.

Internet Safety Week - Safer Internet Day.

Acceptable Use Policy (informs and guides distance learning).

No pupils allowed mobile phones/smartwatches in 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.