



ST. PATRICK'S NATIONAL SCHOOL

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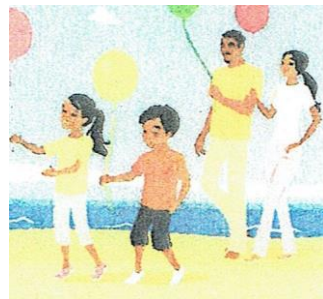
Website: www.stpns.ie

Principal: Rachel Harper

Deputy Principal: Heather Jordan

Board of Management – Chairperson: Canon David Mungavin

Child Safeguarding Statement



2020

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1. Introduction

St Patrick's National School 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 *Tusla Guidance on the preparation of Child Safeguarding Statements*, the Board of Management of St Patrick's National School has agreed the *Child Safeguarding Statement* set out in this document. This statement has been drafted with reference to DES and Tusla guidelines.

2. Nature of service and principles to safeguard children from harm

The Board of Management has adopted and will implement fully and without modification the Department of Education and Skills' *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools 2017* as part of this overall *Child Safeguarding Statement*.

The **Designated Liaison Person (DLP)** is: **Rachel Harper** (Principal)

The **Deputy Designated Liaison Person (DDL)** is: **Heather Jordan** (Deputy Principal)

The Board of Management recognises that child protection and welfare considerations permeate all aspects of school life and must be reflected in all 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 following procedures 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 2077* 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 2072 to 2076*, and to the wider duty of care guidance set out in relevant Garcia 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 members' 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* .
- The Board of Management 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 *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 2075*, 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. In undertaking this risk assessment, the Board of Management endeavoured to identify, as far as possible, the risks of

harm that are relevant to the 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 an annual risk assessment to manage and reduce risk to the greatest possible extent.

- 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.

Note

The above is not intended as an exhaustive list, and may be amended and updated from time to time.

3. Procedures

This *Child Safeguarding Statement* has been developed in line with requirements under the *Children First Act 2015*, the *Children First: National Guidance*, and Tusla's *Child Safeguarding: A Guide for Policy, Procedure and Practice*.

In addition to the procedures listed in the risk assessment (ref Appendix), the following procedures support our intention to safeguard children while they are availing of our service (ref Tusla, *Guidance on developing a Child Safeguarding Statement*, p10):

- € Procedure for the management of allegations of abuse or misconduct against staff/volunteers;
- € Procedure for the safe recruitment and selection of staff and volunteers to work with children;
- € Procedure for provision of and access to child safeguarding training and information, including the identification of the occurrence of harm;
- € Procedure for the reporting of child protection or welfare concerns to Tusla;
- € Procedure for maintaining a list of mandated persons.

4. Risk Assessment

The school's Risk Assessment (ref Appendix 1) was prepared in consultation with Board of Management, staff, parent, and pupil representatives. It is 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*. It may be revised as/when such requirements are noted.

5. Ratification

This *Child Safeguarding Statement* was ratified by the Board of Management.

6. Communication

This Statement has been made available to school personnel, the Parent Teacher Association (PTA), and the Patron. It is also published on the school's website, and is available from the School Office. It may be provided to the DES and Tusla on request.

7. Review

The *Child Safeguarding Statement* and *Risk Assessment* are reviewed by the Board of Management at the first Board meeting of each school year, or as soon as practicable after there has been a material change in any matter to which this statement refers.

Date of next review: **September 2021**

Signed: _____ Signed: _____

Canon David Mungavin
Chairperson Board of Management

Rachel Harper
Principal

Date: _____ Date: _____