



Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment

Child Safeguarding Statement

St Mary's High School is a post-primary school providing post-primary education to pupils from First Year to Leaving Certificate Year.

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 2017](#) and [Tusla Guidance on the preparation of Child Safeguarding Statements](#), the Board of Management of St Mary's High School 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 Donnchadh Ó Briain
- 3 The Deputy Designated Liaison Person (Deputy DLP) is Niamh O Connor
- 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 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 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 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.
- 6 This statement has been published on the school's website and has been provided to all members of school personnel, the Parents' Association (if any) 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.
- 7 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 4/02/2022.

This Child Safeguarding Statement was reviewed by the Board of Management on 4/02/2022.

Signed: 

Chairperson of Board of Management

Date: 7/2/22

Signed: 

Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management

Date: 7/2/22

Child Safeguarding Risk Assessment

Written Assessment of Risk of St Mary's High 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 2017*, the following is the Written Risk Assessment of St. Mary's High School.

General Daily Activities	Potential Risks Associated	Mitigation of Risks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early Arrival • General Arrival • Departure • Mid-morning Break • Lunchtime for students who remain on the premises • Lunchtime for students who leave the premises • Use of Toilet facilities • School Transport • Use of Technology in areas other than the classroom • Congregation in locker areas • Supervised after school study • An 'empty' school at the beginning or end of the school day 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Risk of harm not being recognised by school personnel ➤ Risk of harm not being reported properly and promptly by school personnel ➤ Risk of student being harmed by a member of school personnel ➤ Risk of student being harmed in the school by another child ➤ Risk of harm due to bullying of student ➤ Risk of harm due to inadequate supervision of student in school ➤ Risk of harm where student finds herself last/first in the school building 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The school has a corridor/grounds supervision protocol to ensure appropriate supervision of students during arrival, dismissal and break times and in respect of specific areas such as toilets, changing rooms etc. ✓ The school has a Health and Safety policy ✓ The school has in place a Code of Behaviour for students ✓ All staff are Garda Vetted ✓ All staff have been provided with the Child Safeguarding Statement and have had appropriate training. ✓ The school has an Anti-bullying policy and procedures in place, which have been explained to the whole school community.

Teaching and Learning Activities	Potential Risks Associated	Mitigation of Risks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Classroom interactions • One-to-one teaching • Guidance/counselling one-to-one sessions • Curricular Content and/or presentation in SPHE/RSE/Wellbeing • Use of substitute teachers in the case of absenteeism • Facilitation of all Faiths in Curricular RE • Meetings with Senior Leadership Team members on one-to-one basis • Use of Education Technology within the classroom • Work Experience • Students with Special Needs • Student teachers undertaking training placement in school • Remote classroom interactions and one to one teaching either live or non-live 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Risk of student being harmed in the classroom by another student ➤ Risk of harm due to inadequate supervision of students in classroom ➤ Risk of harm not being recognised by school personnel ➤ Risk of harm not being reported properly and promptly by school personnel ➤ Risk of harm due to bullying of student in classroom ➤ Risk of student being harmed in the classroom by teacher or substitute teacher ➤ Risk of harm in one-to-one teaching ➤ Risk of harm caused by member of school personnel communicating with pupils in an inappropriate manner via social media, texting, digital device or other ➤ Risk of harm while carrying out work experience ➤ Risk of harm caused by personnel not differentiating for the needs of students with Special Needs ➤ Risk of student being harmed in a remote classroom environment by teacher or substitute teacher ➤ Risk of harm in a remote one-to-one teaching environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The school implements in full the SPHE curriculum ✓ The school implements in full the Wellbeing Programme at Junior Cycle ✓ All school personnel are provided with a copy of the school's <i>Child Safeguarding Statement</i> ✓ The <i>Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017</i> are made available to all school personnel ✓ School Personnel are required to adhere to the <i>Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017</i> and all registered teaching staff are required to adhere to the <i>Children First Act 2015</i> ✓ The school adheres to the requirements of the Garda vetting legislation and relevant DES circulars in relation to recruitment and Garda vetting ✓ 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 in place a policy and procedures for the use of external persons to supplement delivery of the curriculum ✓ The school has in place a code of behaviour for students ✓ The school has an RE policy to cater for the needs of all students

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The school has protocols in place for work experience in an external organisation ✓ The school has in place a policy and procedures in respect of student teacher placements ✓ The school has in place a mobile phone policy in respect of usage of mobile phones by students ✓ The school has in place an Acceptable Use policy in respect of usage of all Computers, Internet and Social Media ✓ The school has a Special Educational Needs policy ✓ The school has a policy On the Use of Digital Technology for Remote Teaching and Learning. ✓ The school uses a privacy, security and compliance centered remote learning platform
Pastoral Care <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ One-to-one counselling ➤ School outings ➤ School trips involving overnight stay ➤ School trips involving foreign travel ➤ Care of students with special educational needs, including intimate care where needed, Management of challenging behaviour amongst students. ➤ Administration of Medicine ➤ Administration of First Aid 	Potential Risks Associated <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Risk of harm in one-to-one counselling situation ➤ Risk of harm not being recognised by school personnel. ➤ Risk of harm not being reported properly and promptly by school personnel ➤ Risk of harm to students through bullying when away from home on school trips ➤ Risk of mishandling of students with challenging behaviour ➤ Risk of harm due to inadequate supervision of student 	Mitigation of Risks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The school has a Health and Safety policy ✓ The school has in place a Code of Behaviour for students ✓ All staff have been provided with the Child Safeguarding Statement and have had appropriate training. ✓ The school has an Anti-bullying policy and procedures in place which have been explained to the whole school community. ✓ School Personnel are required to adhere to the <i>Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017</i> and all registered teaching staff are required to adhere to the <i>Children First Act 2015</i>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Curricular provision in respect of SPHE, RSE, Stay Safe ➤ Prevention and dealing with bullying amongst students. ➤ Training of school personnel in child protection matters ➤ Care of students with specific vulnerabilities/ needs such as: ethnic minorities/migrants ➤ Members of the Traveller community ➤ Lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBT) students ➤ Students perceived to be LGBT ➤ Students of minority religious faiths ➤ Students in care ➤ Students on CPNS ➤ Supporting students involved in misuse of Social Media ➤ Sanctioning students involved in misuse of Social Media ➤ Remote One-to-one counselling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Risk of harm to students through lack of understanding of specific needs, including sexual identity, religious and ethnic background ➤ Risk of harm to student ➤ Risk of harm caused by one student to another via inappropriate social media contact, texting, digital device or other ➤ Risk of harm to students by the use of inappropriate or over-harsh sanctions for bullying/misuse of social media ➤ Risk of harm in remote one-to-one counselling situation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The school has in place a mobile phone policy in respect of usage of mobile phones by students ✓ The school has in place an Acceptable Use policy in respect of usage of all Computers, Internet and Social Media ✓ The school has a code of conduct for school personnel (teaching and non-teaching staff) ✓ The school has appointed qualified Guidance teachers ✓ The school has recruited teachers with Special Education Needs training and qualifications ✓ The school appoints qualified SNA's where deemed necessary and funded by the DES ✓ The school has a Tour policy which covers protocols for overnight stays ✓ The school has a Special Educational Needs policy ✓ The school has an active Pastoral Team with particular understanding of the needs of the students in its care, including their background ✓ The school has a set of procedures in relation to the administration of medicines ✓ The school has a policy On the Use of Digital Technology for Remote Teaching and Learning.
<p>Recruitment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principal • Deputy Principal(s) • Teachers • SNA's 	<p>Potential Risks Associated</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Risk of harm to students by personnel who are not qualified 	<p>Mitigation of Risks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The school adheres to the requirements of the Garda vetting legislation and relevant DES

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Administration staff Caretaking Staff Housekeeping Staff Cleaning Staff Short or long term Contractors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Risk of harm to students from personnel who have a history of unacceptable practices in previous employment Risk of harm to students from a member of personnel with a history of abuse Risk of harm to a student by a member of personnel unwilling to commit to the expected standards of the school 	<p>circulars in relation to recruitment and Garda vetting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school has an Employee Handbook and Induction programme for school personnel (teaching and non-teaching staff) When appointing, detailed references are sought The school has a rigorous interview process.
Sporting Activities		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Travelling to matches Changing in school's changing room Changing in the changing rooms of other schools Annual Sports Day School trips involving overnight stay Administration of First Aid following a sports injury Use of external personnel to support sports and other extra-curricular activities Sports coaches Volunteers/Parents in sports activities Student PE teachers Use of social media to record and comment on sporting events 	<p style="text-align: center;">Potential Risks Associated</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Risk of a student being harmed by a member of school personnel, a member of staff of another organisation or other person while participating in sporting activities Risk of harm to student while student is receiving First Aid treatment Risk of harm due to inadequate code of behaviour Risk of harm in one-to-one coaching situation Risk of harm to student due to lack of experience of Student PE teachers Risk of harm caused by member of school personnel communicating with pupils in appropriate manner via social media, texting, digital device or other manner Risk of harm caused by member of school personnel or a student circulating inappropriate material in relation to sporting activities via social media, texting, digital device or other manner 	<p style="text-align: center;">Mitigation of Risks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All staff and volunteers are Garda Vetted All staff have been provided with the Child Safeguarding Statement and have had appropriate training. School sports personnel are required to adhere to the <i>Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017</i> and also are required to adhere to the <i>Children First Act 2015</i> The school implements in full the Wellbeing Programme at Junior Cycle, incorporating PE The school has an Acceptable Use Policy in relation to the use of digital media The School has a Code of Behaviour, drafted in consultation with all stakeholders. The School has a supervision protocol for all major events. The school has a supervision protocol for transport to and from sporting activities Coaching Staff are trained in First Aid

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The school has a Tour policy which covers protocols for overnight stays ✓ The school has in place a policy and procedures in respect of student teacher placements ✓ The school has in place a mobile phone policy in respect of usage of mobile phones by pupils ✓ The school has in place a Code of Behaviour for students
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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 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.