

Mandatory Template 1: Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment Template

Child Safeguarding Statement 2023-2024

Mercy Convent 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 [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 **Mercy Convent** 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 **Cathal Ruane**

3 The Deputy Designated Liaison Person (Deputy DLP) is **Trish Kelly**

4 The Relevant Person is **Cathal Ruane**

(The relevant person is one who can provide information in respect of how the child safeguarding statement was developed and will be able to provide the statement on request. This person can also be the DLP)

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](http://gov.ie) 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.

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Note: The above is not intended as an exhaustive list. Individual Boards of Management shall also include in this section such other procedures/measures that are of relevance to the school in question.

- 7 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.

- 8 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 26/9/2023 [date].

This Child Safeguarding Statement was reviewed by the Board of Management on 26/9/2023 [most recent review date].

Signed: [Signature]
Chairperson of Board of Management

Signed: [Signature]
Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management

Date: 26/9/2023

Date: 26/9/2023

Child Safeguarding Risk Assessment

Written Assessment of Risk of Mercy Convent Primary School

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 PostPrimary Schools (revised 2023)*, the following is the Written Risk Assessment of **Mercy Convent Primary School**.

1. List of school activities	2. The school has identified the following risk of harm in respect of its activities –	3. The school has the following procedures in place to address the risks of harm identified in this assessment -
Training of school personnel in Child Protection matters. — One-to-one teaching. — Care of children with special needs, including intimate care needs.	Harm not recognised or reported promptly. — Harm by school personnel — Harm by school personnel	Child Safeguarding Statement & DE Procedures made available to staff. DLP & DDL P has attended PDST training. All staff to view Túsla training module & any other online training offered by PDST. BOM record all records of staff and board training. All school personnel are provided with a copy of the schools “Child Safeguarding Statement” and it is also available in the staffroom. All staff view Training module & online training in September 2023. The Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post primary Schools (revised 2023) are made available to all school personnel. It is also available in the staffroom. Record on file of training received. — Open doors / Glass in window. Pupil collected and returned to class. — Policy on intimate care

Toilet areas	Inappropriate behaviour Harm by other pupils	Usage and supervision policy ; Children will be encouraged to use the toilet before going out to yard. 2. Procedure for use of toilets. When necessary, children in infant yard use toilets Room 2. They get permission from teacher on yard and are escorted to the room by a prefect ; Code of behaviour School implements SPHE, RSE, Stay Safe in full. Revised and reviewed SPHE Policy
Curricular Provision in respect of SPHE, RSE, Stay Safe	Non-Teaching of same	
Daily arrival and dismissal of pupils	Harm from older pupils, unknown adults on the playground	Arrival and dismissal by teachers / SNA's. New (Revised) morning procedures. Gates open at 8:50am. Children allowed on to school premises and teachers collect them from their class lines at 9:00am. No parents allowed on school grounds in the mornings. Staff supervising main gate. Infant parents allowed on school grounds for infant collection at 1:40pm.
Managing challenging behaviour.	Injury to pupils and staff	Health and Safety Policy Review Code of Behaviour Anti-Bullying Policy
Sports Coaches	Harm to pupils	Policy and procedures in place The school adheres to Garda vetting legislation and relevant DE circulars in relation to recruitment and Garda Vetting. Teacher is present when coach is working with children
Students participating in work experience	Harm by student Confidentiality	Work Placement & Teaching Practice Policy September 2023 Child Safeguarding Statement The school adheres to the requirements of Garda vetting legislation and relevant DE circulars in relation to recruitment and Garda Vetting. Supervised by teachers and staff

Recreation breaks for pupils	Harm from older pupils ; Inappropriate behaviour Bullying	Recreational breaks supervised by teachers and SNA's – Yard supervision rota Anti-Bullying Policy Code of Behaviour
Classroom teaching	Harm by school personnel	Vetting by Teaching Council/College. The school personnel adhere to code of conduct.
Outdoor teaching activities	Inadequate supervision Harm to pupils Bullying	The school personnel adheres to codes of conduct. The school adheres to the requirements of the Garda Vetting legislation and relevant DE circulars in relation to recruitment and Garda vetting. Child Safeguarding Statement. Anti-Bullying Policy Code of Behaviour
Sports activities	Inadequate supervision Harm to pupils, loss of pupils Bullying	The school personnel adheres to codes of conduct. The school adheres to the requirements of the Garda Vetting legislation and relevant DE circulars in relation to recruitment and Garda vetting. Child Safeguarding Statement. Anti-Bullying Policy Policy on School Tours /Excursions Code of Behaviour
School outings	Inadequate supervision Bullying Harm to children by school personnel/volunteers, exposure to unknown adults, loss of pupils	The school personnel adheres to codes of conduct. The school adheres to the requirements of the Garda Vetting legislation and relevant DE circulars in relation to recruitment and Garda vetting. Child Safeguarding Statement. Anti-Bullying Policy Code of Behaviour
Use of toilets in schools	Harm to children with SEN who have particular vulnerability ; Harm to pupils, loss of pupils Bullying	Procedure for use of toilets ;
Annual Sports Day	Harm to children by school personnel /volunteer/other children/visitor	The school personnel adheres to codes of conduct.

	Bullying	The school adheres to the requirements of the Garda Vetting legislation and relevant DE circulars in relation to recruitment and Garda vetting. Child Safeguarding Statement. Anti-Bullying Policy Code of Behaviour
Fundraising events involving pupils	Harm to children by school personnel/volunteer/other child/visitor	The school personnel adheres to codes of conduct. The school adheres to the requirements of the Garda Vetting legislation and relevant DE circulars in relation to recruitment and Garda vetting. Child Safeguarding Statement. Anti-Bullying Policy Code of Behaviour
Use of off-site facilities for school activities	Harm to children by school personnel/volunteer/other children/external coach	The school personnel adheres to codes of conduct. The school adheres to the requirements of the Garda Vetting legislation and relevant DE circulars in relation to recruitment and Garda vetting. Child Safeguarding Statement. Anti-Bullying Policy Code of Behaviour
School transport arrangements	Harm to children by school personnel/volunteer/other children	The school personnel adheres to codes of conduct. The school adheres to the requirements of the Garda Vetting legislation and relevant DE circulars in relation to recruitment and Garda vetting. Child Safeguarding Statement. Anti-Bullying Policy Code of Behaviour
Administration of medicine Administration of First Aid	Harm to pupils	First Aid Policy Procedures for First Aid ; Supervision policy Administration of Medicines Policy
Prevention and dealing with bullying amongst pupils	Harm to pupils by peers ; Bullying by other pupils	Code of Behaviour Anti-Bullying Policy
Use of external personnel to supplement Curriculum	Harm to pupils	All external personnel engaged within the school are Garda vetted. Pupils are always supervised by class teacher when engaging with an external teacher.

Care of pupils with specific vulnerabilities/needs such as • Pupils from ethnic minorities/migrants • Members of the Traveller community • Pupils of minority religious faiths • Lesbian, gay or bisexual or transgender (LGBT) children • Pupils perceived to be LGBT • Children in care • Children on CPNS	Risk of harm to the child from other children in the school Risk of harm due to bullying Risk of harm not being reported promptly by school personnel.	School Safeguarding Statement Anti-Bullying Policy Code of Behaviour Child protection Procedures Stay Safe implemented in full SPHE lessons on bullying at all class levels Friendship week held annually. ‘Weaving Welbeing programme implement in classes
Recruitment of school personnel including : • Teachers • SNAs • Caretaker/Secretary/Cleaners • Sports coaches • External tutors/Guest Speakers • Volunteers/Parents in School Activities • Visitors /contractors present in school during school hours • Visitors / contractors present during after school activities	Harm not recognised properly or promptly reported	Child Safeguarding Statement & DE Procedures made available to all staff Staff to view Túsla training module and any other online training offered by PDST Garda Vetting Procedures All visitors must sign in and out at reception
Use of school premises by other organisations during school day	Harm to pupils by visitors	Garda Vetting Procedures School Safeguarding Statement
Use of Information and Communication Technology by pupils in the school	Bullying Risk of harm due to children inappropriately accessing/using computers, social media, phones and other devices at school	Data Protection Policy, AUP Policy No smart phones/smart watches/ outside devices allowed to be used during school hours as per AUP policy. Mobile Phones Policy Anti-virus software installed on all laptops. Anti-bullying Policy Code of Behaviour Policy

			Safer Internet Awareness Day in school each year.
Application of sanctions under the schools Code of Behaviour	Bullying Harm by school personnel		Anti-bullying Policy Code of Behaviour Staff Code of Conduct Agreed Complaints Procedure
Student teachers undertaking training placement in school	Harm to pupils by students Confidentiality		Garda Vetting Procedures for all student teachers undertaking placement in our school. Student teachers are always supervised by class teacher when in the presence of children School Safeguarding Statement Staff Code of Conduct Work placement & teaching practice policy
Use of video/photography/other media to record school events	Inappropriate use/sharing of images of pupils Cyberbullying		Mobile Phone Policy, ICT Policy Data Protection Policy ; Anti-bullying Policy Parental consent for photographs and recordings to be used within the school received on enrolment. All school events taking place in the school will be photographed by teachers and placed on the school website.
After school use of school premises by other organisations	Harm to pupils by visitor		Garda Vetting Procedures School Safeguarding Statement
Use of staffroom by pupils	Harm to pupils		Children not to enter the staffroom without an adult
Use of washroom by pupil	Harm to pupils		Health and Safety Policy
Parents entering school	Harm to pupils		Child Safeguarding Statement & DE procedures made available to all staff and parents. School policy on communication with parents. Automatic school gate with intercom installed. All parents must enter the school via reception at all times. Since re-opening following COVID no parent allowed into the school other than the reception area.
Distance Learning, Zoom Calls, Seesaw and other online learning platforms	Harm to pupils		ICT Policy Acceptable Use Policy

		Code of Behaviour Policy Child Safeguarding Policy
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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 (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.