

## **Bunscoil na Toirbhirte**



### **Child Safeguarding Statement**

**Bunscoil na Toirbhirte is a primary school providing primary education.**

**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 Bunscoil na Toirbhirte 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 Michael McCarthy**
- 3. The Deputy Designated Liaison Person (Deputy DLP) is Patricia Lambe**
- 4. The Relevant Person is Michael McCarthy.**

**(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. In a school setting the relevant person shall be the designated liaison person.)**

- 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 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.

**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 reviewed by the Board of Management on 1st February 2024**

**Patrick Mullins - Chairperson of Board of Management**

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**Date: 01/02/2024**

**Michael McCarthy - Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management**

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**Date: 01/02/2024**



## **Child Safeguarding Risk Assessment**

### **Written Assessment of Risk of Bunscoil na Toirbhirte, Mitchelstown, Co. Cork**

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 Bunscoil na Toirbhirte.

#### **1. List of school activities**

- Daily arrival and dismissal of pupils
- Accessing the school curriculum in general – includes science experiments, art activities, drama etc
- Curricular provision in respect of Social Personal and Health Education (SPHE), Relationships and Sexuality (RSE), Stay Safe
- Prevention and dealing with bullying amongst pupils
- Training of school personnel in child protection matters
- Classroom teaching
- One-to-one teaching
- Small group teaching
- All Sporting activities, Swimming, GAA, Soccer
- School outings/tours
- Use of toilet/changing/shower areas in schools
- Toileting accidents
- Playtime in school yard
- Use of ICT
- Use of off-site facilities for school activities
- Care of children with special educational needs, including intimate care where needed
- Management of challenging behaviour amongst pupils, including appropriate use of restraint where required
- Administration of Medicine
- Administration of First Aid
- Use of external personnel to supplement curriculum
- Use of external personnel to support sports and other extra-curricular activities
- 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
- Students participating in work experience in the school
- Student teachers/SNA's undertaking training placement in school
- Use of video/photography/other media to record school events
- Display of photographs in school/church/media/social media
- Cookery which is occasionally undertaken – Pancake Tuesday etc
- Whole school events – Assemblies, Céilí, nativity plays, variety show, carol service, Grandparents Day, Sports Day etc
- Sporting Activities – PE classes, Swimming, Gaelic Football, Hurling, Camogie, Rugby, Athletics, 10 @ 10
- Local field trips –Community playground, church, St Fanahan's Well, Leisure Centre, library, shops, sports field, nature walk, history trail etc
- Green School Activities
- Invited guests /Guest Speakers – Brass Band, Fire Brigade, Gardaí, authors, etc
- Administration of Medicine in exceptional cases
- Visiting college inspectors teaching/ inspecting in our school
- Substitute teachers and substitute SNAs working in our school
- Builders/Workers working on the school site
- Teaching pupils with challenging behaviour
- Pupils using stairs in the school
- Parents Council events

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

- Risk of harm not being recognised by school personnel
- 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, Parents Council members, a member of staff of another organisation or other person while child participating in out of school activities e.g. school trip, swimming lessons, GAA/Soccer matches, sporting outings
- 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 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, counselling, coaching situation
- 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 accessing/circulating inappropriate material via social media, texting, digital device or other manner
- Risk of child being harmed in the school by visitors to school.
- Risk of harm to children with SEN who have particular vulnerabilities.
- Risk of harm due to incorrect curricular provision in respect of SPHE, RSE, Stay Safe.
- Risk of harm to children due to adverse weather conditions
- Risk of a medical emergency
- Risk of injury to a pupil on a school outing
- Risk of Critical Incident
- Risk of falling if wearing unsuitable footwear
- Risk of harm due to builders/ workers having access to students
- Risk of injury or harm to students and staff as a result of challenging behaviour of pupils
- Risk of harm to a child using the shower
- Risk of injury to pupils or staff that might slip on the stairs
- Risk of harm or injury to pupils travelling in a staff member's car
- Risk of harm or injury to pupils by unauthorised entry of people

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

- All school personnel are provided with a copy of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment
- The school ensures all new staff are provided with a copy of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement
- The Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017 are made available to all school personnel
- 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
- Swimming- 5 members of female staff will attend swimming with pupils. At least 2 members of female only staff will remain in the swimming dressing room until the last child leaves the dressing room (arriving and leaving). There will always be at least two members of staff together when dealing with a lone child. A record book for all pupils trips to the toilets during the lessons will be kept.
- Sporting Outings- Pupils will be encouraged to have their shorts on under their tracksuits when coming to school on the day of a game or sporting outing. No male member of staff will enter the dressing room while the girls are changing. No member of staff will be on their own with a pupil.
- Members of our Parents Council will not have unsupervised access to pupils during Parents Council events. Members of staff will be present.

- The school implements in full the Stay Safe Programme
- The school implements in full the SPHE curriculum
- 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 rooms etc.
- The school has clear procedures in respect of school outings
- The school has implemented a sign-out system for the early dismissal of pupils
- The school has a Health and Safety Policy
- 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 a code of conduct for school personnel (teaching and non-teaching staff)
- The school has a Special Educational Needs Policy. Pupils must wait in their mainstream classes until they are collected by SET. All Support teachers have glass on their classroom doors, including the Sensory Room. Obstructions such as posters, coats etc. will be removed. One to one teaching- desk between staff member and the pupil.
- The school has Intimate Care procedures in respect of students who require such care. There will always be 2 permanent members of present.
- The school has in place a policy and procedures for the administration of medication to pupils
- The school encourages staff to avail of relevant training
- The school has in place a policy and procedures for the administration of First Aid
- The school has procedures in place in respect of usage of mobile phones by pupils
- The school has in place a Critical Incident Management Plan
- The school has procedures in place for the use of external persons to supplement delivery of the curriculum
- The school has clear procedures in place for one-to-one teaching activities
- The school has procedures in place in respect of student teacher placements
- The school has procedures in place in respect of students undertaking work experience in the school
- The school has a Covid-19 response plan which is updated in accordance with Departmental guidance.
- The school has completed a risk assessment to minimise the risk of being exposed to Covid-19.
- All Bunscoil staff, and visitors to the school are Garda vetted.
- Visitors to the school are never left unsupervised with the pupils. In the case of student teachers/ guest speakers etc. the teacher always remains with his/her class
- WIFI code will be made available to staff only
- Members of staff will never carry pupils in their car unless there is an emergency
- Where possible all necessary building related works will be completed outside of school hours

- Members of staff shall complete a course in Dealing with Challenging Behaviour once every 2 years or sooner if deemed necessary
- Visiting teachers e.g. GAA coach, rugby coach are Garda Vetted and the class teacher remains with his/ her class at all times
- All substitute teachers/ SNAs/ Caretaker/ Ancillary Staff are Garda vetted
- The school has an Acceptable User Policy (AUP) – signed by parents at enrolment and which each child signs from 3<sup>rd</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup>. A speaker addresses the senior classes annually on internet safety.
- Vulnerable children and children who may be a flight risk, are monitored in the yard by SNAs and teaching staff.
- There are security locks on all the door entrances to the school.
- Our School Tours and Field-Trips Policy outlines the procedures in place when children are off the school grounds.
- Bunscoil has a Code of Behaviour and an Anti-Bullying Policy. Parents sign this policy at enrolment and the children sign it, agreeing to uphold the rules, from 3<sup>rd</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup>
- Bunscoil implements the SPHE curriculum. The Stay Safe programme and Relationships and Sexuality programme (RSE) is taught in all classes (Junior Infants to 6<sup>th</sup> class). The Walk Tall and Friends for Life programmes are also taught in the school.
- Fire drills are held regularly (at least once per term)
- We implement our Healthy Eating Policy in Bunscoil
- We are a nut-free school. EPI-pens are kept in appropriate classrooms and a designated SNA always has the EPI-pens in the yard/on excursions.
- A large number of staff members hold current First Aid certification and are trained in the use of our school defibrillator. Staff members will be trained every 4 years.
- Pupils who have an accident in the yard are treated, the incident is documented and parents are informed if necessary.
- Bunscoil na Toirbhirte has a Critical Incident Policy
- Suitable footwear is required for Physical Education and for the yard
- Emergency exits are kept clear at all times.
- Should a child require the use of a shower their parents will be asked to come to school. They will be permitted to use the school shower.
- Floor mats will be placed at the bottom, middle and top of the stairs. Staff will notify the office if there is an area that needs to be dried.
- Entry codes on the doors will be changed in September
- Where possible a member of staff with training in First Aid will accompany pupils on school outings

**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 review was ratified by the Board of Management on the 08/02/2023. It shall be reviewed as part of the school's annual review of its Child Safeguarding Statement.

Patrick Mullins      Date 01-02-2024

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Chairperson, Board of Management

Michael McCarthy      Date 01-02-2024

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Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management