



## **Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment Template**

### **Child Safeguarding Statement**

\_Convent of Mercy National School\_ is a primary/special/post-primary school providing primary/post-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 Convent of Mercy 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 **Aoibhinn O' Neill (Principal)**
- 3 The Deputy Designated Liaison Person (Deputy DLP) is **Karen Gilroy (Deputy Principal)**
- 4 The Relevant Person is **Aoibhinn O' Neill & Karen Gilroy**  
*(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;



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- 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.



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- 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 **30<sup>th</sup> September 2024**

This Child Safeguarding Statement was reviewed by the Board of Management on **30<sup>th</sup> September 2024**

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Chairperson of Board of Management

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



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## Child Safeguarding Risk Assessment



### Written Risk Assessment of the Convent of Mercy N.S., Belturbet, Co. Cavan

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 Convent of Mercy N.S., Belturbet, Co. Cavan.

<i>List of School Activities</i>	<i>Risk Level</i>	<i>The School has identified the following Risk of Harm</i>	<i>The School has the following Procedures in place to address risk identified in this assessment</i>
<i>Training of school personnel in Child Protection matters</i>	High	Harm not recognised or reported promptly	<p>The school's "Child Safeguarding Statement" &amp; "Child Protection Procedures for primary and post-primary schools 2017" made available to all staff</p> <p>School staff are expected to adhere to the Child Protection Procedures</p> <p>DLP&amp; DDLP to attend PDST face to face training</p> <p>All Staff to view Túsla training module &amp; any other online training offered by PDST</p> <p>BOM records all records of staff and board training</p> <p>The school implements in full the Stay Safe Programme, the SPHE Programme.</p>
<i>One to one teaching</i>	Med	Harm by school personnel	<p>School has policy in place for one-to-one teaching</p> <p>SEN Policy</p> <p>Open door/glass in doors</p> <p>Glass in window</p>
<i>Care of Children with special needs, including intimate care needs</i>	High	Harm by school personnel	<p>Policy on intimate care</p> <p>SNA Policy</p> <p>SEN Policy</p> <p>Implementation of Child Protection Procedures</p>



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<i>List of School Activities</i>	<i>Risk Level</i>	<i>The School has identified the following Risk of Harm</i>	<i>The School has the following Procedures in place to address risk identified in this assessment</i>
Toilet areas	High	Inappropriate behaviour Risk of child being harmed	Usage and supervision, teachers will monitor this appropriately.
<i>Curricular Provision in respect of SPHE, RSE, Stay safe.</i>	Med	Non-teaching of same	School implements SPHE, RSE, Stay Safe in full
<i>Daily arrival and dismissal of pupils</i>	Med	Harm from older pupils,	<p>Pupils are dropped at top gate each morning. The Top gate opens at 9.10 am and is closed at 9.30 am. It is the responsibility of parent/guardian to remain with their child until staff member open the gate at 9.10 am. Information communicated to parents RE same.</p> <p>Junior Infant children are escorted down to their classroom by member of staff. All other classes are supervised on path down by members of staff on duty.</p> <p><b><u>Daily dismissal of pupils</u></b> Names and contact details who have permission to collect each child are provided by Parents/guardians of Junior Infants pupils each September prior to school commencing. Parents must advise the school in writing of any changes regarding the collection of their child. Infants are handed over to their parents/guardians/childminders by their teacher. All other classes are escorted to the top gate by their teachers for dismissal. It is the responsibility of parents/guardians to put safe measure in place for the collection of their child at home time.</p>





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<i>List of School Activities</i>	<i>Risk Level</i>	<i>The School has identified the following Risk of Harm</i>	<i>The School has the following Procedures in place to address risk identified in this assessment</i>
<i>Managing of challenging behaviour amongst pupils</i>	High	Injury to pupils and staff  Risk of harm to child	Compliance with guidelines and DES circulars Health & Safety Policy Code Of Behaviour
<i>Sport activities:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>School teams in sporting competitions</i></li> <li>• <i>In school training with sports Coaches</i></li> </ul>	Med	Harm to pupils, visiting coaches & school personnel Use of toilets and changing facilities	Child safeguarding statement provided to all personnel both internal and external. Teacher/SNA present at in-school coaching sessions Children changing into sports gear do so in a manner that preserves dignity and privacy Vetting procedures in place Policy & Procedures in place
<i>Participants in work experience teaching practice and substitutes</i>	Low	Harm by student	Vetting procedures in place Confidentiality agreement spoken to by the principal. Class Teacher is present at all times. Child Safeguarding Statement.
<i>Recreation breaks for pupils</i>	High	Harm from other pupils.	Adequate Staff supervision ( Teacher/ SNA on duty) Staff on duty circulating in all play areas Health & Safety Policy Anti-bullying Policy Code Of Behaviour School security, gate locked and all entry/ exit points locked
<i>Classroom teaching</i>	Low	Harm to pupils	Doors fitted with glass panels Staff supervision Health & Safety Policy Code Of Behaviour.
<i>One-to-one teaching One to One Counselling</i>	Med	Harm by school personnel	Daily recording of all pupils in attendance ( via Aladdin ) Supervision of Pupils Policy School has policy in place for one-to-one teaching Open/glass in doors Glass in window SEN Policy



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<i>Outdoor teaching activities</i>	Med	Harm by school personnel & other pupils	Staff must insure adequate supervision of pupils at all times Risk assessment of areas are completed prior to use and as needs arise to ensure areas are safe to use Toileting protocols similar to those for yard time are implemented. Supervision of all pupils at all times when being coached by outside coaches. Garda Vetting/ Statutory Declaration/ Form of Undertaking for Substitutes. Child Protection Procedures document.
<i>List of School Activities</i>	<i>Risk Level</i>	<i>The School has identified the following Risk of Harm</i>	<i>The School has the following Procedures in place to address risk identified in this assessment</i>
<i>School outings/ Sporting Activities.</i>	High	Harm by school personnel, other adults & other pupils, use of toilets and changing rooms	School tour policy All adults accompanying children will be garda vetted. Risk assessment completed if deemed necessary Changing rooms are closely supervised by staff when in use by children e.g., swimming pool changing rooms. (See Swimming Policy) School tour photographs Pictures may only be taken on school devices. Parental consent is provided before children leave the school grounds to attend events Appropriate Supervision Garda vetting procedures followed.
<i>Annual Sports Day</i>	High	Harm by school personnel other adults, other pupils, use of toilets and changing rooms	Adequate Adult Supervision at all times All school volunteers are vetted Risk assessment completed if deemed necessary Children come dressed appropriately to school Safe use of Website/School Blogs, Photographs, Videos & Social Media Policy
<i>Fundraising events involving pupils Fundraising events organised by Parents Association</i>	High	Harm by school personnel other adults, other pupils, use of toilets and changing rooms	Child safeguarding statement and DES Procedures made available to all relevant parents. School staff present in so far as is possible .





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			Code of conduct for parents and visitors Supervision policy in place.
<i>Use of off-site facilities for school activities</i>	High	Harm by school personnel other adults, other pupils, use of toilets and changing rooms	Risk assessment carried out if deemed necessary  Adequate Supervision of pupils at all times. Child Protection Procedures followed.
<i>School transport arrangements including use of bus escorts</i>	High	Harm by school personnel other adults, other pupils.	Supervision- Bus escorts not in operation at present.
<i>List of School Activities</i>	<i>Risk Level</i>	<i>The School has identified the following Risk of Harm</i>	<i>The School has the following Procedures in place to address risk identified in this assessment</i>
<i>Administration of First Aid</i>  <i>Administration of medicine</i>	Med	Harm by school personnel	Correct administration of First Aid First Aid training for school personnel First Aid administered in open area in view of others unless that this compromises the dignity of the child, two adults to be present if privacy is required. Policy in place for the administration of medicine and First Aid.  SNA intimate care policy.  Open door.  Parents must request administration of medication from school and sign indemnity form. Parents must maintain supply correct medication in date with correct instructions, including dose, time and method.
<i>Prevention and dealing with bullying amongst pupils</i>	Med/ High	Harm by peers and school personnel  Harm not recognised or promptly reported	Implementation of Anti bullying policy and Code of Behaviour, available to view upon request. Restorative practices to be implemented across the school to investigate and resolve conflict. Friendship/wellness week Provision of adequate supervision The school anti-bullying Policy is supported by the planning and teaching of SPHE, RSE, the Stay Safe



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			Programme and the Walk Tall Programme
<i>Training of school personnel in child protection matters</i>		Harm not recognised or reported promptly to the DLP or DDLP  Risk of harm to child	Child Safeguarding statement supplied to all school personnel Retain records of Staff and Board training. All staff to view Tusla training & any other training offered by PDST Staff must supply certificates to the school office. BOM members to attend training available from CPSMA Safe guarding training DLP/DDLP to attend training
<i>List of School Activities</i>	<i>Risk Level</i>	<i>The School has identified the following Risk of Harm</i>	<i>The School has the following Procedures in place to address risk identified in this assessment</i>
<i>Use of external personnel to supplement curriculum</i>	Med	Harm to pupils	Supervision – Teacher present at all times Garda vetting procedures Open/glass indoor. Information in line with curriculum.
<i>Care of pupils with specific vulnerabilities/ needs such as 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 Children in care Children on CPNS</i>	Low	Risk of harm due to bullying of a child  Risk of harm due to racism  Risk of harm due to inadequate supervision of children in school  Risk of harm due to inappropriate communication between child and another child/adult	Child Safeguarding Statement  Compliance with all legislation and DES Circulars regarding Garda Vetting Procedures  Anti-Bullying  Code of Behaviour  The school undertakes anti- bullying initiatives.
<i>Recruitment of school personnel including Teachers SNA's Caretaker/Secretary/Cleaners Sports coaches External Tutors/Guest Speakers Volunteers/Parents in school activities Visitors/contractors present in school during school hours</i>		Harm not recognised or properly or promptly reported  Risk of child being harmed in the school by a member of school personnel	Child Safeguarding Statement & DES procedures made available to all staff.  Staff to view Tusla training module & any other online training offered by PDST annually in September. Compliance with all legislation and DES Circulars.  Vetting Procedures – regular visitors to the school e.g. external coaches, guest speakers must be Garda vetted by the school or provide a copy of



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			<p>their Garda vetting and any other appropriate insurance.</p> <p>Children are supervised by staff members during all school events in which visitors are invited into the school.</p> <p>Policy of Parents/Volunteers School gates has an electronic lock and so visitors must be provided with access by a staff members. Identification required to gain access to the building.</p>
<i>List of School Activities</i>	<i>Risk Level</i>	<i>The School has identified the following Risk of Harm</i>	<i>The School has the following Procedures in place to address risk identified in this assessment</i>
<i>Data Protection</i>	High	Inappropriate Use Harm to pupils	<p>Confidential documents relating to children in the school are stored securely in the school</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hard copies are stored in locked filing cabinets</li> </ul> <p>Documents are shared with staff on a need-to-know basis. Parental permission for transfer of information is obtained if needed Unique coding system is utilised for all documents relating to children.</p>
<i>Use of Information and Communication Technology by staff &amp; pupils in school</i>	Med	Bullying Inappropriate use	<p>AUP for in school device use by pupils Remote teaching and learning policy Anti-Bullying Policy Code of Behaviour Teaching council code of conduct Safe Internet lessons Communication to Parents on same. Photographs policy.</p>
<i>Exposure to inappropriate online content</i>	High	<p>Risk of harm to pupils due to inadequate supervision of pupils</p> <p>Risk of harm to children inappropriately accessing/using computers, social media, phones and other devices when at school.</p>	<p>Use of electronic devices in school by pupils guided by the school's Acceptable Use Policy. Use of electronic devices is monitored and supervised by adult staff. School Internet is provided by PDST Technology in Education which is monitored for inappropriate content and unsuitable websites are blocked. Inappropriate content which appears through the school internet is logged and reported to our Internet provider</p>
<i>Application of sanctions under the school's Code of</i>	Med	Harm by school personnel or other pupils	<p>Code of Behaviour</p> <p>Open/Glass door</p>



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<i>Behaviour including detention of pupils</i>			
<i>Storage or publication of photos of children</i>	Med	Harm to pupils	<p>Written parental permission to take photos of children is obtained by the school upon enrolment &amp; yearly thereafter</p> <p>Class teachers are made aware of any children in his/her class who do not have permission to be in school photos</p> <p>Photos taken by staff should be taken solely on school devices except in exceptional circumstances</p>
<i>Storage or publication of photos of children</i>	Med	Harm to pupils	<p>Children's names are not published with photos uploaded to the school blog.</p> <p>Children are not permitted to use personal electronic devices on the school grounds at any time. If a personal electronic device is used by pupils and images are taken, it is a serious breach of our Code of behaviour and relevant sanctions will be implemented.</p>
<i>Use of video/photography/other media to record school events</i>	Med	Risk of harm to pupils	<p>ICT Policy, AUP Safe use of Website/School Blogs, Photographs, Videos &amp; Social Media Policy Communication to parents at whole school events</p>
<i>After-school clubs:</i>	Med	Harm to children, flight risks	<p>Children are lined up by their class teacher and handed over to the after-school staff. Adherence to all health and Safety procedures.</p>
<i>After school use of school premises by other organisations</i>	Low	Harm to children	<p>BOM permission Patron Approval if necessary Signed Contract Copy of child safeguarding statement Copy of other organisation's Insurance</p>
<i>Entry &amp; Exit of school buildings</i>	Med	Risk of harm to children due to inadequate supervision Flight Risks	<p>School gates to be closed @ 9.30 am</p>



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<i>Recreation breaks</i>	Med	Inadequate supervision of pupils Bullying by other pupils	Adequate supervision of pupils Anti-bullying policy Children re-entering the building must have permission from a teacher. Separate yard spaces for each class
<i>Use of toilet facilities</i>	High	Harm by school personnel or peers Inappropriate behaviour	Only one child is allowed in the toilet at any one time. Classrooms – only one child is allowed to leave their classroom at any one time in main building. Arrangements in place by staff during break times Code of Behaviour.
<i>Curricular Provision in respect of SPHE, RSE and Stay Safe</i>	Low	Non-teaching or inadequate teaching of material	School implements SPHE, RSE and Stay safe in full
<i>Participation in religious ceremony</i>	Med	Harm by parish/school personnel Inappropriate relationship/communications between child and other adult	Child Safeguarding Statement and DES Procedures made available to all relevant parish personnel. Preparation for sacraments take place in an open area such as the church Confessions take place in an open area School staff present at all times
<i>Christmas Concert Performances &amp; Plays</i>	High	Harm by school personnel/parents/spectators Inappropriate recording of pupils Subsequent inappropriate use and/or circulation of material via social media, texting, digital device and or other manner	All school staff present Acceptable Use Policy Safe use of Website/School Blogs, Photographs, Videos & Social Media Policy Pupils changing into costumes do so in a manner preserving dignity and privacy. Communication with parents prior to the performance
<i>Annual Sports Day Outdoor Learning</i>	Low	Harm by inadequate supervision	Adequate supervision Risk assessment is completed if deemed necessary
<i>Student teachers on school placement</i>	Med	Harm by student teacher Inappropriate relationship/communications between child & other adult/child	Garda vetting carried out by relevant college. Child safeguarding statement made available to student Class teacher and/or school personnel to remain in the classroom while the student teacher is teaching at all times. Work Placement & Work Experience Policy.
<i>Transition Year Student on Placement</i>	Med	Harm by TY Student Inappropriate relationship/communications between child & other adult/child.	Garda vetting sought if the student is 16 years of age or over. Child safeguarding statement and DES Procedures made available to TY student. Class teacher to remain in



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			the classroom with student teacher at all times. Work Placement & Work Experience.
<i>Daily School Life during the Covid-19 Pandemic</i>	High	Contract Covid-19 leading to serious illness and/or spread of the virus	School Covid-19 response plan in place with the Dept. of Ed Guidance Return to work Protocol Public Health Advice.
<i>Exposure to infectious diseases or viruses</i>	High	Illness/spread of virus	In the event of an epidemic or pandemic, the school will follow guidelines from relevant government bodies, e.g. HSE, DES, NPHET, for the prevention and control of infectious diseases in schools and procedures will be put in place accordingly If a Child presents in school with symptoms of an infectious -disease or virus their parents will be asked to collect them and to seek further advice from a GP.  The children will be supervised by an adult member of staff when waiting for parents to collect them.
<i>Provision of Summer Programme</i>	Med	Harm by school personnel	Child Safeguarding Statement available to teacher, SNA and Overseer. DLP in the building at all times Teacher is a mandated person Two adults present with the children at all times
<i>Online teaching and learning remotely</i>	Med	Risk of harmful content Risk of harm due to inappropriate use of online remote teaching and learning communication platform such as an uninvited person accessing the lesson link, students being left unsupervised for long periods of time.	Adult present with the child during remote and online teaching Acceptable Use Policy Remote teaching and learning Policy Safe Internet Lessons

**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*



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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.

**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.

This risk assessment has been adopted by the Board of Management on. It shall be reviewed as part of the school's annual review of its Child Safeguarding Statement.

**Signed:-** Alan Traynor  
(Chairperson BOM)

Date:-: 30<sup>th</sup> September 2024

**Signed:-** Aoibhinn O'Neill  
Principal

Date:-: 30<sup>th</sup> September 2024