



Convent of Mercy N.S.,
Belturbet,
Cavan,
Co. Cavan.
Tel:- (049) 9522992
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Child Safeguarding Statement & Risk Assessment

Child Safeguarding Statement

Convent of Mercy N.S., 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's 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 Convent of Mercy N.S., 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 **Mrs Celine Clarke (Principal)**
- 3 The Deputy Designated Liaison Person (Deputy DLP) is **Ms Karen Gilroy (Deputy Principal)**
- 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



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for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017 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 2012 to 2016 and to the wider duty of care guidance set out in relevant Garda 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 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 above named 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, 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 these procedures.
- 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. Individual Boards of Management shall also include in this section such other procedures/measures that are of relevance to the school in question.

- 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 15th February 2022.

Signed: Alan Traynor
Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed: Karen Gilroy
Acting Principal/Secretary BoM

Date:- 15th February 2022

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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.

1. List of school activities

1. Training for school personnel in Child Protection matters
2. One to one teaching
3. Care of children with special needs including intimate care needs
4. Curricular provision in respect of SPHE, RSE and Stay Safe
5. Toilet areas
6. LGBT Pupils, Trans Pupils and Pupils perceived as LGBT Ethnic minorities etc;
7. ICT usage by pupils and staff
8. Recruitment of new staff
9. External Tutors and Guest speakers
10. Extra - Curricular Sports Coaches
11. TY students on Work Experience Student teachers
12. Challenging behaviour amongst pupils and/or against staff
13. Volunteers /Visitors/ Parents
14. Health and Safety
15. Administration of Medicine/First Aid
16. School tour and trip policy
17. Swimming lessons
18. Annual Sports Day



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

1. Harm not recognised or reported promptly or correctly
2. Harm by school personnel
3. Risk of child being harmed in the school by another child, Harm by school personnel
4. Non- teaching of the same
5. Inappropriate behaviour
6. Bullying
7. Risk of harm due to children inappropriately accessing/using computers, social media, phones and other devices while at school
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
Bullying and inappropriate behaviour
8. Harm not recognised or reported promptly and correctly
9. Harm to pupils
10. Harm to pupils
11. Harm to pupils
12. Injury to pupils and staff
13. Harm to Pupils
14. Risks to entire school community
15. Risk to child/children's health and well -being
16. Risk of child being harmed by a member of school personnel, a member of staff of another organisation or other person while child participating in out of school activities e.g. school trip, swimming lessons , Risk to pupils
17. Risk of child being harmed by a member of school personnel, a member of staff of another organisation or other person while child participating in out of school activities e.g. school trip, swimming lessons , Risk to pupils
18. Risk of child being harmed by a member of school personnel, a member of staff of another organisation or other person while child participating in out of school activities e.g. school trip, swimming lessons , Risk to pupils



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

1. 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*

Ensures all new staff are provided with a copy of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement.

Encourages Board of Management members to avail of relevant training

Child Safeguarding Statement and DES Procedures available to all school personnel.

DLP and DDLP to attend PDST face to face training.

All staff to view Tusla and PDST training module.

BOM records all records of staff and BOM training.

All visiting staff and part-time teachers to comply with Garda Vetting Legislation and to be familiarised with the Child Safeguarding Statement.

Child protection to be on the agenda for all BOM meetings.

2. Open Doors,
Table between teacher and Pupil,
Glass panels in doors,
Comprehensive SEN policy and procedures in place, SNA policy to include Intimate Care Needs.

3. The school has a Special Educational Needs Policy
Intimate Care Policy in place.
All SNAs/teachers familiar with policy.
Differentiated programmes in place for the teaching of the Stay Safe and RSE Programme.
The school implements the following programmes, in full:-Stay Safe Programme, SPHE Curriculum/Walk Tall, RSE Programme.
Relevant Topics in the Weaving Well-Being Programme and Friends For Life (Senior Classes)

4. Usage and Supervision Policies in place



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5. The school has an Anti-Bullying Policy which fully adheres to the requirements of the Department's *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*. Code of Positive Behaviour Policy in place
6. Laptop Use Agreement,
Remote Learning Policy,
Anti- Bullying Policy,
Acceptable Use Policy,
Mobile Phone Policy.
7. Child Safeguarding Statement and Children First Procedures available to all staff.
All new staff to complete On-line Tusla Children First Module and PDST Child Protection Modules. Once completed all Certificate to be given to Principal.
Code of Conduct by the Teaching Council
8. Policy on External Personnel.
9. The school has in place a Policy and Procedures for the use of external persons to supplement delivery of the curriculum
10. Garda Vetting, Policy and Procedures in place. No "One to One" situations.
The school has in place a Policy and Procedures for the use of external sports coaches
11. The school has in place a Policy and Procedures for the use of external sports coaches.
The school has in place a Policy and Procedures in respect of students undertaking work experience in the school. Student informed of Child Protection Procedures. National Bureau Vetted.
12. Health and Safety Policy in place.
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 in place a Policy and clear Procedures in respect of school outings.
Code of Behaviour Policy in place.
SESS interventions and/or training if necessary.
13. Health and Safety Policy in place.
Supervision Policy in place.
Code of Behaviour Policy in place.
SESS interventions and/or training if necessary.
14. Health and Safety Policy in place.
15. The school has in place a Critical Incident Management Plan.
Policies and Procedures in place.
Regular communication with parents/ adults and outside agencies.
Records of medication administered kept securely in children's files.



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16. The school has in place a Policy and Procedures for the Administration of First Aid Adequate Supervision by adults as per our insurance company's instruction, Seatbelt Policy and Toileting Policy
The school has in place a Policy and Procedures for the use of external sports coaches
17. Swimming Policy in place when/if Pupils resume swimming lessons
The school has in place a Policy and Procedures for the use of external sports coaches
18. The school adheres to the requirements of the Garda Vetting Legislation and relevant DES Circulars in relation to Recruitment and Garda vetting.
Vetting Procedures in place,
Children Supervised by parents/guardians and staff.
Procedures carefully worked out.
Parents informed of details of day

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.

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.

Examples of School Activities:

- Daily arrival and dismissal of pupils
- Recreation breaks for pupils
- Classroom teaching
- One-to-one teaching
- One-to one learning support
- One-to-one counselling
- Outdoor teaching activities
- Online teaching and learning remotely



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- Sporting Activities
- School outings
- Use of toilet areas in schools
- Annual Sports Day
- Fundraising events involving pupils
- Use of off-site facilities for school activities
- School transport arrangements
- 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
- Management of provision of food and drink
- Administration of Medicine
- Administration of First Aid
- Curricular provision in respect of SPHE, RSE, Stay Safe
- Prevention and dealing with bullying amongst pupils
- Training of school personnel in child protection matters
- Use of external personnel to supplement curriculum
- Use of external personnel to support sports and other extra-curricular activities
- 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
 - Children with medical needs
- 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
 - Visitors/contractors present during after school activities
- Participation by pupils in religious ceremonies/religious instruction external to the school
- Use of Information and Communication Technology by pupils in school
- Application of sanctions under the school's Code of Behaviour including detention of pupils, confiscation of phones etc
- Students participating in work experience in the school
- Student teachers undertaking training placement in school



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- Use of video/photography/other media to record school events

Examples of Risks of Harm:

- 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 a volunteer or visitor to the school
- Risk of child being harmed by a member of school personnel, a member of staff of another organisation or other person while the child is participating in out of school activities e.g. school trip, swimming lessons
- Risk of harm due to bullying of child
- Risk of harm due to racism
- 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

Examples of Procedures to Address Risks of Harm:

- All school personnel 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*
- The school implements in full the Stay Safe Programme
- The school implements in full the SPHE curriculum
- The school implements in full the Wellbeing Programme at Junior Cycle
- The school has an Anti-Bullying Policy which fully adheres to the requirements of the Department's *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*



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- The school undertakes anti-racism awareness initiatives
- 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 in place a policy and clear procedures in respect of school outings
- The school has a Health & 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 complies with the agreed disciplinary procedures for teaching staff
- The school has a Special Educational Needs policy
- The school has an Intimate Care Policy/Plan in respect of students who require such care
- The school has in place a policy and procedures for the administration of medication to pupils
- The school:
 - Has provided each member of the school 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
 - Maintains records of all staff and board member training
- The school has in place a policy and procedures for the administration of First Aid
- The school has in place a Code of Behaviour for pupils
- The school has in place an ICT policy in respect of usage of ICT by pupils
- The school has in place a Mobile Phone Policy in respect of usage of mobile phones by pupils
- The school has in place a Critical Incident Management Plan
- The school has in place a policy and procedures for the use of external persons to supplement the delivery of the curriculum
- The school has in place a policy and clear procedures for one-to-one teaching activities
- The school has in place a policy and procedures in respect of student teacher placements
- The school has in place a policy and procedures in respect of students undertaking work experience in the school
- The school has in place a policy and procedures in respect of pupils of the school undertaking work experience in external organisations

This risk assessment has been adopted by the Board of Management on **15th February 2022**. It shall be reviewed as part of the school's annual review of its Child Safeguarding Statement.

Signed Alan Traynor
Chairperson, Board of Management

Date 15th February 2022



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Signed Karen Gilroy
Acting Principal/Secretary, Board of Management

Date 15th February 2022