



## Child Safeguarding Statement

St. Mochta's National School 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 St. Mochta's National 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 (revised 2023)* as part of this overall Child Safeguarding Statement
- 2 The Designated Liaison Person (DLP) is Maria Farrell, Principal.
- 3 The Deputy Designated Liaison Person (Deputy DLP) is Keri Kennedy, Deputy Principal.
- 4 The Relevant Person is Maria Farrell.  
*(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 adopted by the Board of Management on 8<sup>th</sup> April 2024.

This Child Safeguarding Statement was reviewed by the Board of Management on 8<sup>th</sup> April 2024.

Signed: 

Chairperson of Board of Management

Date: 8<sup>th</sup> April 2024

Signed: 

Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management

Date: 8<sup>th</sup> April 2024

## Child Safeguarding Risk Assessment

### Written Assessment of Risk of St. Mochta's National 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 (revised 2023)*, the following is the Written Risk Assessment of St. Mochta's National School.

#### 1. List of school activities

- a) Daily arrival and dismissal of pupils
- b) Recreation for pupils
- c) Administration of medicine
- d) Classroom teaching
- e) One-to-one teaching
- f) Sporting activities
- g) School Outings
- h) Use of toilets/changing areas in school
- i) Annual Sports Day
- j) Use of off-site facilities for school activities
- k) School transport arrangements
- l) Care of children with Special Educational Needs (including intimate care where needed)
- m) Management of challenging behaviour amongst pupils including appropriate use of restraints when required.
- n) Curricular provision in respect of SPHE, RSE and Stay Safe
- o) Prevention and dealing with bullying amongst pupils
- p) Training of school personnel in child protection matters
- q) Use of external personnel to supplement curriculum
- r) Use of external personnel to support extra-curricular and sporting activities
- s) Care of pupils with specific vulnerabilities/needs such as pupils from ethnic minorities, migrants/members of the Traveller Community, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual or Transgender (LGBTQ+) children and children perceived to LGBTQ+ and pupils from minority religious faiths and of no religion and pupils in care
- t) Recruitment of school personnel including teachers, SNAs, caretaker, secretaries, cleaners and external tutors and guest speakers, volunteer parents at school activities, visitors, contractors present in the school during school hours.
- u) Use of IT by pupils in school
- v) Secondary students participating in work experience and student teachers undertaking training placement in the school
- w) Visitors to the school during school hours
- x) Contractors working in school
- y) Extra-curricular activities taking place after school hours
- z) Use of video/photography/other media to record school events.
- aa) Online teaching and learning.
- bb) Use of premises outside of teaching hours.

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

- a) Children entering the school grounds before supervision begins. Children with additional needs coming into the school grounds and getting confused with the large numbers of children entering at 8.30am. Making sure children go home with correct person. Children from classes walking home alone. Latecomers – safety on the stairs.
- b) Risk of harm due to bullying, rough play, access to outside areas. Risk of children choking on food while eating their lunch.
- c) Risk of harm due to medical issues and access to medication unsupervised.
- d) Children at risk of harm by school personnel or by another pupil.
- e) Risk to child on their own to abuse and to a teacher of a false allegation.
- f) Risk of harm due to injury to inappropriate relationship/communication between a child and another child or adult.
- g) Risk of abuse of child by supervisor/instructor not employed by the school.
- h) Risk of abuse of a child or unfounded allegation made against a staff member.
- i) Risk of children leaving the premises.
- j) Levels of supervision on excursions/trips. Risk at swimming pools. Risk of public transport. Photographs & social media.
- k) Parents bringing children in their car to school matches/school transport/photography and social media.
- l) Risk of accusations for staff and loss of privacy for child. Risk of child being touched inappropriately.
- m) Child could be injured if inappropriately handled. Accusations against staff.
- n) Children may not be mature enough to process and speak about bodily changes and this may cause upset and embarrassment.
- o) Child may experience heightened anxiety if the bullying isn't noticed or reported.
- p) Children may be at risk if staff didn't have an understanding of the different forms of abuse.
- q) Inappropriate conversations.
- r) Risk of harm due to inappropriate relationship/communications between child and adult.
- s) Risk of harm due to bullying of child. Risk of harm to children with SEN who have particular vulnerabilities. Risk of harm in a one-to-one teaching, counselling or coaching situation.
- t) Risk of child being harmed in the school by a member of school personnel. Risk of child being harmed in the school by a volunteer or visitor to the 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 an adult.
- u) Risk of accessing inappropriate material, risk of cyberbullying.
- v) Risk of child being harmed by student or student teacher.
- w) Harm by visitor.
- x) Harm to child through exposure on social media sites.
- y) Risk of harm through cyberbullying, inappropriate behaviour from homes of others, risk of lesson being hacked by inappropriate person.
- z) Risk of harm by adult.

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

- a) Staff Supervision from 8.30am to 8.50am. SNAs meet some children with SEN at school gates and escort them to their lines on the yard. SNAs wait to meet children who are late and escort them to their classrooms. Children are escorted on the stairs. Staff on duty wear high viz jackets so they can be easily identified by all children. SNAs escort children to their parents at the end of the day. Teachers (Junior Classes) ensure children are met by their parents at the end of the day. Children in Senior Classes are encouraged to walk home with a friend.
- b) 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. All staff have a copy of the policy and implement the policy.  
The school has adequate supervision in place during yard times. Active supervision is in place. The Code of Behaviour is followed at all times.  
Children are not permitted to eat on yard. They are supervised eating their lunch in their classrooms.
- c) The School has an Administration of Medication Policy.
- d) Teachers will always ensure that a colleague is able to supervise their class before leaving the room. Supervision procedures are in place.
- e) All SET rooms have glass panels so teachers can be seen at all times. One-to-one teaching is being phased out but may be required for some children with SEN.  
*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* and its Addendum (2019)  
The school implements in full the Stay Safe Programme  
The school implements in full the SPHE curriculum  
The school has in place clear procedures for one-to-one teaching activities
- f) Supervision procedures are in place. Swimming Policy/Procedures are in place.  
The school has a Health and Safety Policy.  
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
- g) School staff must be present with the children at all times. Children will never be left in the sole care of a non-staff member.  
The school has yard/playground supervision procedures to ensure appropriate supervision of children at all times.  
The school has a Health and Safety Policy.  
The school has in place procedures for the use of external persons to supplement delivery of the curriculum. The school has a School Tour Policy.
- h) The school has a Toileting and Intimate Care Policy. One child allowed to access toilet area at any one time in classroom. Permission must be sought from supervising teacher to access toilets from school playgrounds. One child to use toilet area at any one time.
- i) The school complies with the agreed disciplinary procedures for teaching staff
- j) The school has a policy on school tours. Extra supervision is in place when using public transport. Children are not permitted to use mobile phones.
- k) Most volunteers are vetted with the school. Children are not permitted to use mobile phones. Those who are not vetted are under the supervision of someone who is vetted.
- l) 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

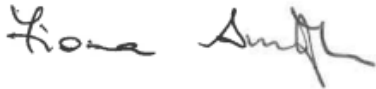
- m) Health and Safety Policy.  
Some staff have received Studio 3 Training.
- n) The school implements in full the Stay Safe Programme  
The school implements in full the SPHE curriculum
- o) The school has an Anti-Bullying Policy which fully adheres to the requirements of the Department's *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*  
The school undertakes anti-racism awareness initiatives
- p) 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* and its Addendum (2019)  
The school –  
Has provided each member of 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
- q) Class teachers are always present for any visits from external personnel.
- r) 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*  
The school undertakes anti-racism awareness initiatives.  
The school has a Special Educational Needs Policy.  
The school has in place procedures for the use of external sports coaches  
The school has in place clear procedures for one-to-one teaching activities
- s) The school adheres to the requirements of the Garda vetting legislation and relevant DE circulars in relation to recruitment and Garda vetting  
The school has a codes of conduct for school personnel (teaching and non-teaching staff)  
The school complies with the agreed disciplinary procedures for teaching staff.
- t) The school has an Acceptable Use Policy in place, to include provision for online teaching and learning remotely, and has communicated this policy to parents.  
Department of Education and PDST Filter.  
Anti-Bullying Policy,  
Code of Behaviour  
Stay Safe Programme
- u) The school has in place procedures in respect of pupils of the school undertaking work experience in external organisations.
- v) Security access at main door. Access not granted beyond reception unless accompanied by staff member and wearing a visitor's badge.
- w) All work undertaken after school hours, during mid-term breaks or during holiday periods. All contractors who are not Garda Vetted are accompanied by caretaker during school days.
- x) All tutors Garda Vetted and produce Statutory Declaration.
- y) Parents/Children are asked not to record plays/school events or take photos.  
Staff taking photos of children should not be put on social media or shared by staff.
- z) We have a Distance Learning Policy and procedures are in place.
- aa) Fully train all St. Mochta's NS cleaners in Child Safeguarding.

**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.

This risk assessment has been reviewed by the Board of Management on 8<sup>th</sup> April 2024.

It will be reviewed as part of the school’s annual review of its Child Safeguarding Statement.



Signed  
Chairperson, Board of Management

Date: 8<sup>th</sup> April 2024



Signed  
Principal/Secretary Board of Management

Date: 8<sup>th</sup> April 2024