



Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment



Child Safeguarding Statement

St. Bernadette's Special School is a special school providing primary/post-primary education to pupils from 4 – 18 years of age.

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. Bernadette'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 (revised (2023))* as part of this overall Child Safeguarding Statement
- 2 The Designated Liaison Person (DLP) is: Mr. John Haran
- 3 The Deputy Designated Liaison Person (Deputy DLP) is: Ms. Jenny Redmond
- 4 The Relevant Person is: Ms. Jenny Redmond
- 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 _____ .

This Child Safeguarding Statement will be reviewed by the Board of Management on _____ .

Signed: _____

Chairperson of Board of Management

Signed: _____

Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management

Date: _____

Date: _____

Child Safeguarding Risk Assessment

Written Assessment of Risk of St. Bernadette's Special 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 [name of 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	Harm not recognised or reported promptly	<p>Child Safeguarding Statement & DES procedures made available to all staff</p> <p>DLP& DDLP to attend PDST face to face training/ online seminars.</p> <p>All Staff to view Tusla training module & any other online training offered by PDST</p> <p>BOM records all records of staff and board training</p>
One to one teaching	Harm by school personnel	<p>School has policy in place for one to one teaching</p> <p>Open doors/ glass in windows or doors</p> <p>Table between teacher and pupil</p> <p>Glass in window</p> <p>Second member of staff accompany child where feasible.</p> <p>Other staff aware of activity.</p> <p>All staff are Garda Vetted</p>
Care of children with special needs, including intimate care needs	Harm by school personnel	Policy on intimate care

Toilet areas	Inappropriate behaviour	Usage and supervision policy
Curricular Provision in respect of SPHE, RSE, Stay safe.	Non-teaching of same	School implements SPHE, RSE, Stay Safe in full School implements Wellbeing
Managing of challenging behaviour amongst pupils, including appropriate use of restraint	Injury to pupils and staff	Health & Safety Policy which has section on restraint. Staff Training in PETMA completed by all staff. Code Of Behaviour
Daily arrival and dismissal of pupils	Harm from other pupils, unknown adults on the playground Traffic on avenue Unpredictable behaviour in pupils.	Arrival and Dismissal Policy & Procedures Supervision Policy Traffic Management Policy & Procedures Health & Safety Policy
Recreation breaks for pupils	Injury to pupils/Bullying Harm not recognised or properly or promptly reported	Policy & Procedures in place Health & Safety Policy Code Of Behaviour
Classroom teaching	Harm by school personnel	Staff are Garda Vetted Where possible 2 staff in room Door possible to be left open but H&S come first
Outdoor teaching activities	Harm by other pupils Harm by external personnel	The school has in place procedures in respect of school outings and activities.
Sporting Activities	Harm by other pupils Harm by school personnel	The school has in place procedures in respect of school outings and activities.
Play Therapy	Harm to pupils	Policy & Procedures in place
Sports Coaches	Harm to pupils	SPHE/ PE Policy & Procedures in place and school staff are present during activities.

Students participating in work experience	Harm by student	<p>Work experience Procedures Child Safeguarding Statement. Garda Vetting All such students are vetted from their college; many are also vetted through the school if time allows. Such students can work with children but should always be accompanied by school staff, they should not work alone with a child outside of the classroom. Such students can assist with supervision as long as there is a staff member present too.</p>
Educational Trips/Matches	Unknown adults in area.	<p>The school has in place procedures in respect of school outings and activities: Pre notification to management/written on termly planner. Class teacher and staff accompanies and supervises class and have duty of care at all times during outing. When in another location with external staff providing activity, school staff are aware of their duty of care and continue to supervise children particularly for toilets in public places.</p>
Use of toilet	Inappropriate Behaviour	<p>Usage and supervision policy Intimate Care Policy Administration of medicines policy Health & Safety Policy</p>
Annual Sports Day	Harm by other pupils Harm by school personnel	The school has in place procedures in respect of school outings and activities:

		Supervision by staff of their pupils during activities
Use of off-site facilities for school activities	Inappropriate behaviour	The school has in place procedures in respect of school outings and activities: Supervision by staff of their pupils during activities
School transport arrangements including use of bus escorts	Harm to pupils Bullying Harm not recognised or properly or promptly reported	Bus Safety Policy Policy for Bus Escort Staff Garda Vetted and trained in Child Safeguarding
Volunteers/Parents	Harm to pupils	Vetting Procedures Policy for Parents/Volunteers
Management of challenging behaviour amongst pupils, including appropriate use of restraint where required	Physical Harm to pupils *This is not same as Health & Safety risk of injury	Code of Behaviour Policy which has section on Restraint Health & Safety Policy
Administration of First Aid		Accidents & Injuries at school policy Administration of Medicine policy
Administration of Medicine		Administration of Medicine policy.
Curricular provision in respect of SPHE, RSE, Stay Safe	Non-teaching of same	School implements SPHE, RSE, Stay Safe in full School implements Wellbeing
Prevention and dealing with bullying amongst pupils	Harm by other pupils	Code of Behaviour Anti-Bullying Policy Anti-Cyber Bullying Policy

<p>Use of external personnel to supplement curriculum</p>	<p>Harm by external personnel</p>	<p>SPHE Policy & Procedures in place Visiting teachers are professionals and have been vetted through Teaching Council and can work with children but school staff continue to support and supervise children For coaches/volunteers etc. a staff member must be present, class teacher ideally in first instance or classroom SNA's</p>
<p>Care of pupils with specific vulnerabilities/ needs such as</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 	<p>Bullying</p>	<p>Anti-bullying Policy Anti- Cyber Bullying Policy Code of Behaviour</p>
<p>Recruitment of school personnel including -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers • SNA's • Caretaker/Secretary/Cleaners • Sports coaches 	<p>Harm not recognised or properly or promptly reported.</p>	<p>Child Safeguarding Statement & DES procedures made available to all staff</p> <p>Staff to view Tusla training module & any other online training offered by PDST</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • External Tutors/Guest Speakers • Volunteers/Parents in school activities • Visitors/contractors present in school during school hours • Visitors/contractors present during after school activities 		<p>Vetting Procedures</p> <p>Policy of Parents / Volunteers</p> <p>Policy on Visiting Contractors For coaches/volunteers etc. a staff member must be present, class teacher ideally in first instance or classroom SNA's</p>
<p>Use of Information and Communication Technology by pupils in school</p>	<p>Bullying Staff not following policies & procedures</p>	<p>ICT policy Anti- Cyber Bullying Policy Anti-Bullying Policy Code of Behaviour</p>
<p>Use of online digital Learning Platforms for long distance learning in the event of school closures/ pupils restricting movements during Covid-19</p>	<p>Bullying Staff not following policies and procedures.</p>	<p>ICT policy Anti-Cyber Bullying Policy Anti-Bullying Policy Code of Behaviour Internet Acceptable Usage Policy</p>
<p>Application of sanctions under the school's Code of Behaviour including detention of pupils, confiscation of phones etc.</p>	<p>Harm by Staff</p>	<p>Code of Behaviour</p>
<p>Students participating in work experience in the school</p>	<p>Harm by student</p>	<p>Work Experience Procedures Child Safeguarding Statement. Garda Vetting All such students are garda vetted from their college, many are also vetted through the school if time allows</p>

		Such students can work with children but should always be supervised or accompanied by school staff, they should not work alone with a child outside the classroom Such students can assist with supervision as long as there is a school staff member present too.
Student teachers undertaking training placement in school	Risk of Harm not being recognised	Work Experience Procedures Child Safeguarding Statement Garda Vetting All such students are garda vetted from their college, many are also vetted through the school if time allows Such students can work with children but should always be supervised or accompanied by school staff, they should not work alone with a child outside the classroom Such students can assist with supervision as long as there is a school staff member present too.
Use of video/photography/other media to record school events	Inappropriate use of photos, online- breach of privacy	School can ask guests to refrain from taking photos, or if they do not, to not post photos of children who are not their own child online

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)*

