

Child Safeguarding Statement



October 2020

Child Safeguarding Statement of St. Joseph's Mercy Primary School

Roll Number - 16100Q

St Joseph's Mercy Primary 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 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 St. Joseph's Mercy Primary 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 2017 as part of this overall Child Safeguarding Statement
- 2 The Designated Liaison Person (DLP) is Ann Murphy, Principal
- 3 The Deputy Designated Liaison Person (Deputy DLP) is Evania Holian , 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.
- 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 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 trainingThe 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 this 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 this statement.
 - 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.
- 6 This statement has been published on the school’s website and has been provided to all members of school personnel, the Parents’ Association, 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 is 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 19th October 2020.

Corona McDermott
Chairperson of Board of Management

Ann Murphy
Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management

Written Assessment of Risk of St. Joseph's Mercy Primary School

Roll No. 16100Q

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 St Joseph's Mercy Primary School.

1. List of School Activities

- Daily arrival and dismissal of pupils
- Recreation breaks for pupils
- Classroom teaching
- Remote learning on an online learning platform (Seesaw) in the case of a school closure
- Opportunities for children to upload homework assignments onto Seesaw
- One-to-one teaching
- One-to-one counselling
- One-to-one assessments
- Outdoor teaching activities
- Sporting activities
- Swimming for 3rd / 4th classes
- School outings / trips
- Use of toilet / changing 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
- Administration of Medicine
- Administration of First Aid
- Curricular provision in respect of SPHE, RSE, Stay Safe Programme
- 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
 - Pupils perceived to be LGBT
 - Lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender(LGBT) children
 - Pupils of minority religious faiths

-Children in care

-Children on CPNS

- Recruitment of school personnel including -
Teachers/SNAs
Caretaker/Secretary/Cleaners
Sports Coaches
External Tutors/Guest Speakers
Volunteers/Parents involved with school activities
- Visiting teams or school groups
- Visitors/contractors present in school during school hours
- Personnel from outside agencies
- Visitors/contractors present during after-school activities
- Participation by pupils in religious ceremonies
- 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, or others, undertaking training placement/work experience in school
- Use of video/photography/other media to record school events
- After-school use of school premises by other organisations
- After-school Homework Club

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

Risk of harm not being recognised by school personnel - Low

Risk of harm not being reported properly and promptly by school personnel - Low

Risk of child being harmed in the school by a member of school personnel - Low

Risk of child being harmed in the school by a volunteer or visitor to the school - Low

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 - Low

Risk of harm due to inadequate supervision of children in school - Low

Risk of harm due to inadequate supervision of children while attending out-of-school activities - Low

Risk of harm due to children inappropriately accessing/using computers, social media, phones and other devices while at school - Low

Risk of harm to children with SEN who have particular vulnerabilities - Low

Risk of harm to child while a child is receiving intimate care - Low

Risk of harm due to inadequate Code of Behaviour - Low

Risk of harm in one-to-one teaching, counselling, coaching situation - Low

Risk of harm caused by member of school personnel communicating with pupils in an inappropriate manner via social media, texting, digital device or other manner - Low

Risk of harm caused by member of school personnel accessing/circulating inappropriate material via social media, texting, digital device or other manner - Low

Risk of harm due to bullying of child - Medium

Risk of child being harmed in the school by another child - Medium

Risk of harm due to inappropriate relationship/communications between a child and another child – Medium

Risk of harm due to children inappropriately accessing / using computers, social media, phones and other devices outside of school - Medium

Risk of harm from unauthorised personnel on school grounds (due to the open nature of our school site) - Medium

Risk of pupils who are “minders” misunderstanding their roles and dealing with issues instead of reporting them to the supervising teacher - Medium

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*
- 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 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 has a yard/playground supervision policy to ensure appropriate supervision of children during assembly, dismissal and breaks. The school has in place clear procedures in respect of school outings
- 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 complies with the agreed disciplinary procedures for teaching staff
- The school has a Special Educational Needs Policy
- The school has an intimate care and toileting policy 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 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 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 procedures to deal with First Aid
- The school has in place procedures for the use of external persons to supplement delivery of the curriculum
- The school has in place clear procedures for one-to-one teaching activities
- The school has in place a policy and procedures for one-to-one counselling
- The school has in place procedures in respect of student teacher placements
- The school has in place procedures in respect of students undertaking work

experience in the school

- The school has in place procedures for the signing out of pupils who are leaving the school during the day due to illness, medical appointments or urgent family business
- The school has in place procedures that parents of junior pupils notify school of person collecting pupil and also when there is any change to this arrangement.

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 has been completed by the Board of Management on 19th October 2020. It shall be reviewed as part of the school's annual review of its Child Safeguarding Statement.

Corona McDermott

Chairperson, Board of Management

Ann Murphy

Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management