



River Valley Community National School:

Child Safeguarding Statement

River Valley Community National School is a developing primary school which opened with a class of junior infants in 2019. There are currently 141 students enrolled in the school, from junior infants to fourth 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, revised 2023 and Tusla Guidance on the preparation of Child Safeguarding Statements, the Board of Management of River Valley Community 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 Kildea (Acting Principal)
3. The Deputy Designated Liaison Person (Deputy DLP) is Amie Kenny (Acting Deputy Principal)
4. The Relevant Person is Maria Kildea
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:

- a. recognise that the protection and welfare of children is of paramount importance, regardless of all other considerations
- b. fully comply with its statutory obligations under the Children First Act 2015 and other relevant legislation relating to the protection and welfare of children
- c. fully co-operate with the relevant statutory authorities in relation to child protection and welfare matters
- d. 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
- e. develop a practice of openness with parents and encourage parental involvement in the education of their children and
- f. 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:

- a. 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 gov.ie.
- b. 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 gov.ie.
- c. 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
 - i. Has provided each member of staff with a copy of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement
 - ii. Ensures all new staff are provided with a copy of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement
 - iii. Ensures all staff receive training in relation to Child Safeguarding Procedures in River Valley CNS
 - iv. Encourages staff to avail of relevant training
 - v. Encourages Board of Management members to avail of relevant training
 - vi. The Board of Management maintains records of all staff and Board member training
- d. 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.
- e. 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 child safeguarding statement.
- f. All registered teachers employed by the school are mandated persons under the Children First Act 2015.
- g. 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.

- h. The various procedures referred to in this Statement can be accessed via the school's website, gov.ie or will be made available on request by the school.

Please Note: The above is not intended as an exhaustive list. The Board of Management of River Valley CNS shall also include/alter in this section other such procedures/measures that are of relevance to River Valley CNS.

6. This statement has been published on the school's website and has been provided to all members of school personnel, the Parent Teacher partnership of River Valley CNS 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 [date].

Signed:

Signed:

Chairperson of Board of Management

Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management

Date



River Valley CNS – Risk Assessment

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 Rivervalley CNS. The aim of this risk assessment is to identify the risks posed to children within the school environment. All areas outlined in this assessment are considered to be high risk. However, the school aims to reduce the likelihood and severity of these risks through the procedures outlined within it. The school has adopted these procedures as they are considered best practise within our own school context, but it also acknowledged that there may be instances when said procedures cannot be applied exactly as they are described. A common sense approach will be utilised to ensure that procedures are followed as closely to best practise as possible.

List of school activities	The school has identified the following risk of harm	The school has the following procedures in place to address risk identified in assessment
Daily arrival and dismissal of pupils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harm from unknown persons during daily arrival of pupils. • Harm from parents or other care providers during late arrival. • Harm from other students during daily arrival. • Harm caused by inadequate supervision. • Risk of infection spreading 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Pedestrian gate is coded to ensure security <input type="checkbox"/> Teachers and SNAs carry out morning supervision duty in their classrooms from 8.15am to 8.30am daily. <input type="checkbox"/> Parents are informed of their responsibility to ensure their children make it to the yard safely. <input type="checkbox"/> Children will sanitise their hands after hanging their coats up as they enter the classroom.

	<p>Dismissal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harm from unknown persons, particularly for younger children, during collection time. • Harm from other students during daily dismissal. • Harm caused by inadequate supervision. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Children are dismissed in the yard directly to their parent/ after school care provider by their class teacher. <input type="checkbox"/> Parents are asked to maintain social distance in the yard and leave promptly on collection. <input type="checkbox"/> Any teacher with children left to be collected brings the children to the foyer in open view of the office until they are collected. No teacher remains by themselves while waiting for a child whose parent is late.
<p>Recreation breaks for pupils including but not limited to breaks in the yard and classroom such as Aistear, Golden Time and wet yard times</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk of harm not being recognised due to inadequate supervision • Harm from other students including, but not limited to, bullying • Harm from members of staff during recreation breaks • Risk of harm not being reported by the child or another bystander 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> The principal ensures that all teachers are Garda vetted before they undertake a teaching position within the school. <input type="checkbox"/> Teachers remain in the classroom with their class at all times. If a teacher needs to leave their class for a few minutes during the regular teaching day, he/she will notify their neighbouring teacher so they can supervise both classes. <input type="checkbox"/> Teachers ensure that the entire class is always within their view. <input type="checkbox"/> Teachers ensure that they interact professionally with children at all times and that they only develop relationships with children with the intent of improving children's level of comfort within the classroom and engagement with learning as a result. <input type="checkbox"/> School administration, mainstream and learning support teachers work collaboratively to ensure that provisions are put in place to ensure the social security and safety of children with special educational and other needs in the classroom, including but not limited to applications for Special Needs Assistants, special educational programmes in SPHE and other curricular areas etc.

<p>One to one teaching</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harm stemming from particular vulnerabilities that children receiving one to-one support may have including, but not limited to; special educational needs, language difficulties, physical disabilities, social, emotional and behavioural difficulties etc. • Harm from member of staff during one-to-one teaching • Harm due to the development of an inappropriate relationship between a child and a member of staff through one-to-one teaching and learning • Harm due to inadequate supervision when collecting and returning children from one-to-one teaching • Risk of infections spreading 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> The principal ensures that all teachers are Garda vetted before they undertake a teaching position within the school. <input type="checkbox"/> Teachers ensure the classroom door is left open and occupants are visible when teaching in a one-to-one setting. <input type="checkbox"/> In the event that 1:1 teaching is deemed necessary for the educational development of a child, clear boundaries will be put in place: the teacher will be seated opposite the child, the classroom door will remain open (where the attention levels of the child allow). <input type="checkbox"/> Staff will work with children in SEN rooms when available (glass panels in doors) where the occupants are visible at all times. <input type="checkbox"/> Teachers collect and return individual children to their classroom. <input type="checkbox"/> Class teachers implement the Stay Safe and RSE programmes in Term 2 in line with the school's SPHE plan to equip all children, including those with specific vulnerabilities, with the language, knowledge and skills that enable them to understand and voice any concerns they may have. <input type="checkbox"/> A differentiated version of the Stay Safe Programme is offered to children with special educational needs to ensure that they have access to the Stay Safe programme content. This is taught by the child's SEN teacher. <input type="checkbox"/> Areas are sanitised after each child/group works in a support room.

<p>Outdoor teaching activities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harm due to inadequate supervision • Harm from unknown person who is in the outdoor activity space at the same time as the children completing an activity in said space • Harm from another student whilst completing the outdoor activity • Harm from a member of staff whilst completing the outdoor activity • Harm to children with SEN or other vulnerabilities in an outdoor setting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Teacher remains with entire group at all times and that all students are in sight. <input type="checkbox"/> Where necessary, additional supervision is provided for through the use of parent volunteers or support from learning support teachers. <input type="checkbox"/> There is no official ratio for supervision. Such supervision is allocated based on the needs of the group, with some classes needing more supervision than others. <input type="checkbox"/> Teacher surveys the outdoor space in advance of an activity to ensure that it is secure. Teacher ensures that children are put in pairs before leaving the school building to complete the outdoor activity. These pairs are utilised to shorten the length of the line in which the children are walking and for bathroom use. <input type="checkbox"/> Teacher ensures necessary support is put in place for children particular vulnerabilities stemming from a special educational or other need. This includes, but is not limited to, support from an SNA or additional supervision through the use of another adult. <input type="checkbox"/> Teacher remains with entire group as much as possible. <input type="checkbox"/> Parent volunteers may be allocated to a group, and may be required to independently supervise this group, whilst being overseen by the teacher, who will check in regularly.
<p>Sporting activities, including but not</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harm from another student during the event 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Teacher ensures that activities are organised to reduce the risk of

<p>limited to the annual Sports Day</p> <p>Fundraising events involving pupils</p> <p>School outings, including but not limited to yearly school tour and other school trips</p> <p>Use of off-site facilities for school activities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harm from a member of staff during the event • Harm from a volunteer during the event • Harm due to inadequate supervision of the event 	<p>inappropriate/harmful interactions between students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Teacher outlines rules and responsibilities of children before they commence their engagement in the sporting activity. <input type="checkbox"/> Parent/other volunteers are never left alone with individual children. These adults should ensure they are with at least two children or another adult at all times. <input type="checkbox"/> Parent/other volunteers who will be volunteering regularly in the school will be vetted by the DDLETB. <input type="checkbox"/> Children will always visit the toilet in pairs. Where it is deemed necessary, an adult will accompany both children to the bathroom, and remain outside while the children use the facility.
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<p>Moving around the building including, toilet use, streaming, messages, returning from learning support</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harm from another student who is accompanying or meeting a child as they make their way around the building • Harm from a member of staff who encounters a child making their way around the building • Harm from a visitor or unknown person who encounters a child making their way around the building 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Toilet procedure established and practised at the beginning of the year within individual classrooms <input type="checkbox"/> Timers or another in class procedure set in classroom to ensure timely return of the children to the class. <input type="checkbox"/> Visitors asked to sign in at the desk and wear a visitors badge. <input type="checkbox"/> Learning support teachers allow small groups of children to return to their classrooms together. <input type="checkbox"/> Individual children are accompanied by their teacher.
<p>Care of children with special education needs, including intimate care where needed</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harm from member of staff meeting intimate care needs of a child with special educational needs • Harm from another student 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> A differentiated Stay Safe programme is taught to children with special educational needs, if deemed appropriate <input type="checkbox"/> School staff providing intimate care are Garda vetted by the ETBI <input type="checkbox"/> Permission sought from parents to meet intimate care needs of children, and specific outline of said needs agreed upon by parents and care provider, usually an SNA. <input type="checkbox"/> Permission is sought from parents to meet any intimate care needs when intimate care commences. <input type="checkbox"/> Through GMGY, SPHE, Human Rights Month, and discretely through other curricular areas, children are provided with the opportunity to learn about and understand differences. This is hoped to be a preventative measure to reduce the risk of harm of a student with special educational needs by other students.

<p>Administration of Medication</p> <p>Administration of First Aid</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harm by another member of staff while first aid/medication is being administered • Risk of the spread of infection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> As much as possible, medication/first aid will be administered in the whole class setting and by the child themselves <input type="checkbox"/> When first aid needs to be administered by a member of staff, that member of staff will ensure that first aid is administered in a public space, and/or in the presence of another child or member of staff. <input type="checkbox"/> Where medication needs to be regularly administered in a room other than the child's mainstream classroom, yard or another public space in the school and/or with assistance from a member of staff, permission will be sought from the child's parents. <input type="checkbox"/> Where medication is being administered by school staff, written instructions from child's parents/guardians is required before any medication can be administered in school as stated in the school's Administration of Medication Policy. <input type="checkbox"/> In the case of an emergency, medication will be administered without delay. The child's parents will be informed of any action taken as soon as possible and relevant emergency services will be contacted
<p>Curricular provision in respect to SPHE, RSE, and Stay Safe</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procedures set out in Antibullying policy not followed by members of staff • Anti-bullying lessons/other preventative measures not being implemented or completed in full • Child/children not reporting bullying 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> 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. <input type="checkbox"/> Anti-bullying policy covered with new staff every year, and reviewed bi-annually. <input type="checkbox"/> Anti-bullying lessons and/or other preventative measures implemented formally during anti-bullying week and incidentally when needed Bullying lessons

<p>Other Adults Use of external personnel to supplement curriculum</p> <p>Use of external personnel to support sports and other extracurricular activities including after school classes</p> <p>Use of parents or other members of the community to support curriculum engagement</p> <p>Use of school premises by other organisation during the school day.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DLP/DDLP not equipped to fulfil duties • Harm caused by the external coordinator/after school provider/once-off visitor/visitor attending an activity provided by an outside organization during the school day • Harm caused by another child participating in the lesson or afterschool activity • Harm due to inadequate supervision 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> The DLP/DDLP will complete joint reports with mandated persons to support them with the monitoring and reporting processes. <input type="checkbox"/> Through their oversight report, the BoM are responsible for ensuring that all procedures set out in the CSS have been followed correctly. <input type="checkbox"/> Training/retraining for the DLP/DDLP will occur annually. In the case of maternity, sick or other temporary leave, those assuming the roles of Acting DLP will avail of the necessary training at the earliest opportunity. It is the responsibility of the Board of Management to ensure that such training is provided. <input type="checkbox"/> External coordinators visiting school during school hours: <input type="checkbox"/> External coordinators will not be left alone with an individual or group of children. <input type="checkbox"/> They will be supervised by the class teacher at all times. <input type="checkbox"/> External coordinators will be Garda vetted. <input type="checkbox"/> External coordinators are required to sign in and out of the school building, and wear a visitor's badge. <input type="checkbox"/> External coordinators will be required to read the school's CSS in advance of providing classes during the school day. <input type="checkbox"/> THE DLP/DDLP are responsible for ensuring this. They must sign in and out of the school and complete a contact tracing form at the office. <input type="checkbox"/> After school club providing their own service out of school hours: After School Club Protocols are read and signed by the after school provider. A member of the ISM Team is designated to liaise with after school providers.
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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. This risk assessment has been completed by the Board of Management on _____September 2023. It shall be reviewed as part of the school's annual review of its Child Safeguarding Statement.

Signed _____ Date _____

Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed _____ Date _____

Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management



Appendix 2

List of Mandated Personnel

Teachers registered with The Teaching Council:

- Maria Kildea
- Amie Kenny
- John Duignan
- Angela McCaughey
- Rebekah Lawless
- Niamh Corry
- Chris Claffey
- Paul Butler
- Marisa O' Mahony
- Sarah Mc Sweeney



Appendix 3

Checklist for Review of the Child Safeguarding Statement

The *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools, revised 2023* require the Board of Management must undertake a review of its Child Safeguarding Statement and that the following checklist shall be used for this purpose. The review must be completed every year or as soon as practicable after there has been a material change in any matter to which the Child Safeguarding Statement refers. Undertaking an annual review will also ensure that a school also meets its statutory obligation under section 11(8) of the Children First Act 2015, to review its Child Safeguarding Statement every two years.

The checklist is designed as an aid to conducting this review and is not intended as an exhaustive list of the issues to be considered. Individual Boards of Management shall include other items in the checklist that are of relevance to the school in question.

As part of the overall review process, Boards of Management should also assess relevant school policies, procedures, practices and activities vis a vis their adherence to the principles of best practice in child protection and welfare as set out in the school's Child Safeguarding Statement, the Children First Act 2015 and the *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools, revised 2023*.

	Yes/No
1. Has the Board formally adopted a Child Safeguarding Statement in accordance with the 'Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools, revised 2023'?	
2. As part of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement, has the Board formally adopted, without modification, the 'Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools 2023'?	
3. Does the school's Child Safeguarding Statement include a written assessment of risk as required under the Children First Act 2015?	
4. Has the Board reviewed and updated where necessary the written assessment of risk as part of this overall review?	
5. Has the DLP attended available child protection training?	
6. Has the Deputy DLP attended available child protection training?	
7. Have any members of the Board attended child protection training?	
8. Are there both a DLP and a Deputy DLP currently appointed?	
9. Are the relevant contact details (Tusla and An Garda Síochána) to hand?	
10. Has the Board arrangements in place to communicate the school's Child Safeguarding Statement to new school personnel?	

11. Is the Board satisfied that all school personnel have been made aware of their responsibilities under the 'Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools 2023' and the Children First Act 2015?	
12. Has the Board received a Principal's Child Protection Oversight Report at each Board meeting held since the last review was undertaken?	
13. Since the Board's last review, was the Board informed of any child protection reports made to Tusla/An Garda Síochána by the DLP?	
14. Since the Board's last review, was the Board informed of any cases where the DLP sought advice from Tusla/and as a result of this advice, no report to the HSE was made?	
15. Since the Board's last review, was the Board informed of any cases where an allegation of abuse or neglect was made against any member of school personnel?	
16. Has the Board been provided with and reviewed all documents relevant to the Principal's Child Protection Oversight Report?	
17. Is the Board satisfied that the child protection procedures in relation to the making of reports to Tusla/An Garda Síochána were appropriately followed in each case reviewed?	
18. Is the Board satisfied that, since the last review, all appropriate actions are being or have been taken in respect of any member of school personnel against whom an allegation of abuse or neglect has been made?*	
19. Were child protection matters reported to the Board appropriately recorded in the Board minutes?	
20. Is the Board satisfied that all records relating to child protection are appropriately filed and stored securely?	
21. Has the Board been notified by any parent in relation to that parent not receiving the standard notification required under section 5.6 of the 'Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools 2023'?	
22. In relation to any cases identified at question 21 above, has the Board ensured that any notifications required section 5.6 of the 'Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools 2023' were subsequently issued by the DLP?	
23. Has the Board ensured that the Parents' Association (if any), has been provided with the school's Child Safeguarding Statement?	
24. Has the Board ensured that the patron has been provided with the school's Child Safeguarding Statement?	
25. Has the Board ensured that the school's Child Safeguarding Statement is available to parents on request?	
26. Has the Board ensured that the Stay Safe programme is implemented in full in the school? (applies to primary schools)	
27. Has the Board ensured that the Wellbeing Programme for Junior Cycle students is implemented in full in the school? (applies to post- primary schools)	
28. Has the Board ensured that the SPHE curriculum is implemented in full in the school?	

29. Is the Board satisfied that the statutory requirements for Garda Vetting have been met in respect of all school personnel (employees and volunteers)?*	
30. Is the Board satisfied that the Department's requirements in relation to the provision of a child protection related statutory declaration and associated form of undertaking have been met in respect of persons appointed to teaching and non-teaching positions?*	
31. Is the Board satisfied that, from a child protection perspective, thorough recruitment and selection procedures are applied by the school in relation to all school personnel (employees and volunteers)?*	
32. Has the Board considered and addressed any complaints or suggestions for improvements regarding the school's Child Safeguarding Statement?	
33. Has the Board sought the feedback of parents in relation to the school's compliance with the requirements of the child safeguarding requirements of the 'Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools 2023'	
34. Has the Board sought the feedback of pupils in relation to the school's child safeguarding arrangements?	
35. Is the Board satisfied that the 'Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools 2023' are being fully and adequately implemented by the school?	
36. Has the Board identified any aspects of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement and/or its implementation that require further improvement?	
37. Has the Board put in place an action plan containing appropriate timelines to address those aspects of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement and/or its implementation that have been identified as requiring further improvement?	
38. Has the Board ensured that any areas for improvement that that were identified in any previous review of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement have been adequately addressed?	

Signed _____ Date _____

Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed _____ Date _____

Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management

Appendix 4



Notification regarding the Board of Management's review of the Child Safeguarding Statement

To: _____

The Board of Management of River Valley CNS wishes to inform you that:

- The Board of Management's annual review of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement was completed at the Board meeting of _____ .
- This review was conducted in accordance with the "Checklist for Review of the Child Safeguarding Statement" published on the Department's 'website www.education.ie

Signed _____ Date _____

Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed _____ Date _____

Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management



Appendix 5

Reasonable Grounds for Concern/Threshold of Harm

Reasonable grounds for a child protection or welfare concern include:

- Evidence (e.g. injury or behaviour) that is consistent with abuse and is unlikely to have been caused in any other way
- Any concern about possible sexual abuse
- Consistent signs that a child is suffering from emotional or physical neglect
- A child saying or indicating by other means that he or she has been abused
- Admission or indication by an adult or a child of an alleged abuse they committed
- An account from a person who saw the child being abused

Types of Child Abuse:

Neglect

The threshold of harm, at which you must report to Tusla under the Children First Act 2015, is reached when you know, believe or have reasonable grounds to suspect that a child's needs have been neglected, are being neglected, or are at risk of being neglected to the point where the child's health, development or welfare have been or are being seriously affected, or are likely to be seriously affected.

Emotional Abuse/Ill-Treatment

The threshold of harm at which you must report to Tusla under the Children First Act 2015, is reached when you know, believe or have reasonable grounds to suspect that a child has been, is being, or is at risk of being ill-treated to the point where the child's health, development or welfare have been or are being seriously affected, or are likely to be seriously affected.

Physical Abuse

The threshold of harm, at which you must report to Tusla under the Children First Act 2015, is reached when you know, believe or have reasonable grounds to suspect that a child has been, is being, or is at risk of being assaulted and that as a result the child's health, development or welfare have been or are being seriously affected, or are likely to be seriously affected.

Sexual Abuse

If as a mandated person, you know, believe or have reasonable grounds to suspect that a child has been, is being, or is at risk of being sexually abused, then you must report this to Tusla under the Children First Act 2015. As all sexual abuse falls within the category of seriously affecting a child's health, welfare or development, you must submit all concerns about sexual abuse as a mandated person to Tusla.

In accordance with section 2 of the Children First Act, 2015 the defined threshold of "harm" in relation to a child is as follows: "harm" means, in relation to a child- (a) assault, ill-treatment or neglect of the child in a manner that seriously affects or is likely to seriously affect the child's health, development or welfare, or (b) sexual abuse of the child, whether caused by a single act, omission or circumstance or a series or combination of acts, omissions or circumstances, or otherwise;"

"ill-treatment" means, in relation to a child, to abandon or cruelly treat the child, or to cause or procure or allow the child to be abandoned or cruelly treated; "neglect" means, in relation to a child, to deprive the child of adequate food, warmth, clothing, hygiene, supervision, safety or medical care; "welfare" includes, in relation to a child, the moral, intellectual, physical, emotional and social welfare of the child.



Appendix 6

Summary of Reporting Procedures

Below is a summary of the actions to be taken in relation to Child Protection Concerns. These give an outline and it is important to take time to consult the *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools 2023* for details before proceeding. Chapter 5 contains the details of Reporting Concerns.

Allegations of abuse made against school staff may require immediate action involving suspension of the teacher, SNA or member of ancillary staff. The Board of Management (BoM) should always seek comprehensive legal advice before embarking on such action.

When a Registered Teacher has a Child Protection Concern (Procedures 5.1.1 / 5.1.2)

- A Teacher will immediately report a child protection concern to the DLP. The Teacher will work with the DLP on the reporting procedures
- A registered teacher is a mandated person and has a statutory obligation to make a mandated report to Tusla. This will normally be done by making a joint mandated report with the DLP.

When someone else in the School Community has a Child Protection Concern

- SNA/Ancillary Staff – Report Concern to DLP (Procedures 5.1.1 / 5.1.2)
- Parent/Guardian - Report Concern to DLP (Procedures 5.6)

Actions of DLP on becoming aware of a Concern (Procedures 5.1.1 / 5.1.2)

- Open a Secure File – use child's Clár Uimhir
- Record all details of the Concern
- Consult:
 - i. Resource Bundle and PAMs
 - ii. Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017

- iii. Children First National Guidelines 2017
 - Commence Reporting Procedure

*Recording Procedures
(Procedures 5.3 / 5.4)*

Are there Reasonable Grounds for Concern? Have the Thresholds for Harm been reached?

- If yes – Make a mandated report to TUSLA
- If unsure – Consult with TUSLA and follow advice given. Be clear that you are consulting only and do not give details of persons involved
- If in any doubt – make a mandated report
- If thresholds not reached, but you have concerns – make a report If TUSLA are not available and the case warrants immediate response, report to Gardaí

Records of Reporting

- Record the details of the concern in the file
- Keep records of all reports made to TUSLA or Gardaí
- Record details of advice sought:
 - i. The person you spoke to
 - ii. The advice given
- When the DLP decides not to make a Report to TUSLA

*When the DLP decides not to make a report to TUSLA
(Procedures 5.3.8)*

- Inform the reporting person in writing of the decision not to make a report
- Inform the reporting person that they may make a report to TUSLA and give the school a copy
- Keep copies of the above in the file
- Keep a copy of any report by the reporting person in the file
- Include all details in your next oversight report to the BoM

*Informing Parents
(Children First Chapter 3 P.25 and Procedures 5.3.6)*

A school is not required to inform the family that a report is being made to Tusla. It is good practice however to tell the family that a report is being made and the reasons for the decision.

It is not necessary to inform the family if by doing so:

- i. the child will be placed at further risk
- ii. might impair Tusla's ability to carry out a risk assessment
- iii. you believe that you are putting yourself at risk of harm from the family

The DLP may seek advice from TUSLA regarding informing the family. A record shall be made of the information communicated by the DLP to the parent/carer. A decision by the DLP not to inform a parent/carer shall be recorded together with the reasons for not doing so.

In any case, where a registered teacher is submitting a report to Tusla, the DLP, rather than the teacher concerned, shall assume the responsibility for informing the parent/carer.

Child Protection Oversight Report (CPOR)
(Procedures 5.5)

The Principal (normally DLP) will make a CPOR at every BoM meeting. It will detail:

- Any allegations of abuse raised in relation to school staff since the last BoM meeting
- Other child protection concerns raised in relation to any child since the last BoM meeting
- Child protection concerns regarding alleged bullying behaviour since the last BoM meeting
- Summary data in respect of Reporting

TUSLA Reporting Forms

TUSLA has 2 Reporting Forms

- *Child Protection and Welfare Report Form* *Click here for Form and Guidance Notes*
- *Retrospective Abuse Report Form* *Click here for Form and Guidance Notes*



Appendix 7

Summary of Record Keeping Requirements

The section references below relate to '*Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017*' and summarise the main record-keeping requirements set out in those procedures as follows:

Section 3.4 sets out requirements on individual members of the school staff to record child protection concerns that they may have, including disclosures from children and any actions taken in respect of same

Section 5.1.1 requires that the DLP shall make a written record of any concern brought to his or her attention by a member of the school staff and will place this record in a secure location

Section 5.3.3 requires that in all cases where the DLP has sought the advice of Tusla, the DLP will retain a record of the consultation which will note the date, the name of the Tusla official and the advice given

Section 3.4.4 requires that the DLP shall retain a copy of every report submitted by him or her to Tusla and shall keep a record of any further actions taken by the DLP and of any further communications with Tusla, An Garda Síochana or other parties in relation to that report

Section 3.4.5 requires that all records created shall be regarded as highly confidential and placed in a secure location

Section 3.4.6 requires that to allow for the effective recording and tracking of relevant records and actions, child protection case files and any parties referenced in such files shall be assigned a unique code or serial number by the DLP. In this context 'parties' means any party whose identity, if disclosed, might lead to the identification of a child or a person against whom an allegation has been made

Section 9.4 requires that a Child Protection Oversight Report must be provided to the Board of Management (BoM), as part of the principal's report to the board, at every BoM meeting. The information that will be provided in this report is set out at sections 9.5 to 9.8 of these procedures

Sections 9.5, 9.6 and 9.7 provide that the minutes of BoM meetings will record child protection matters by reference to the unique code or serial number assigned to the case/parties concerned

Section 5.3.6 requires that where the DLP informs a parent/carer that a report concerning his or her child is being made, a record will be made of the information communicated by the DLP to the parent/carer. It also requires that a decision by the DLP not to inform a parent/carer shall be recorded together with the reasons for not doing so

Section 5.3.8 requires that if the DLP decides that the concern of the member of school personnel, including that of a mandated person should not be reported to Tusla, the DLP shall give the member of the school staff a clear statement, in writing, as to the reasons why action is not being taken. A copy of this statement shall

be retained by the DLP. Where that member of the school staff decides to make a report to Tusla, he or she must provide the DLP with a copy of that report

Section 5.6 requires that where the DLP issues a notification to a parent in accordance with that section, a copy of that notification shall be retained by the DLP

Section 3.5.4 requires the BoM to ensure that arrangements are in place to ensure that the DDLP can access relevant records when required

Section 8.1 3.6 requires that records of the annual review of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement and its outcome shall be retained and made available, if requested, to the patron and/or the Department.

The above is not intended to be an exhaustive list of the record keeping requirements in these procedures and school personnel should ensure that records are maintained in line with the requirements set out in these procedures.



Appendix 8

Summary of Record Keeping Requirements

If a child discloses information to you:

- (a) It is important to stay calm and not to show any extreme reaction to what the child is saying. Listen compassionately and take what the child is saying seriously;
- (b) It should be understood that the child has decided to tell about something very important and has taken a risk to do so. The experience of telling should be a positive one so that the child will not mind talking to those involved;
- (c) The child should understand that it is not possible that any information will be kept a secret;
- (d) No judgmental statement should be made about the person against whom the allegation is made;
- (e) No promises should be made that the abuse will stop.
- (f) The child should not be questioned unless the nature of what he/she is saying is unclear. Leading questions should be avoided. Open, non-specific questions should be used such as "Can you explain to me what you mean by that?";
- (g) The child should be given some indication of what would happen next, such as informing the Designated Liaison Person, parents/carers, HSE or possibly An Garda Síochána. It should be kept in mind that the child may have been threatened and may feel vulnerable at this stage;
- (h) Record the disclosure immediately afterwards using, as far as possible, the child's own words. Note Date, time and child's registration number, sketching signs of physical injury on recording sheet.
- (i) Give this written report to the D.L.P. signed and dated.



Appendix 9

Monitoring Suggestions

Useful Hint: Enter your observations under the various headings as appropriate. This will help to categorise your observations and enable you to note an emerging pattern or a deteriorating situation.

Possible Areas for Monitoring	Best Practice Suggestion
<p>River Valley CNS Using agreed record form ensures school standard is applied.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Record observations using code to protect anonymity of child ■ Keep in secure place ■ Strictly confidentiality
<p>Attendance and Punctuality Dates and times are important, since patterns or absence or lateness can be very revealing. If late, note if brought to school by parent/carer/older sibling and record any explanation offered</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Remember to sign and date each entry
<p>Appearance, Hygiene and Care Record observations of the child's appearance, for example, poor hygiene, inappropriate clothing, no lunch</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Record observations in chronological order
<p>Physical Injury Give detailed description including, in the child's or carer's own words, if any explanation is offered.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Include sketch of injury, if appropriate
<p>Child's Behaviour A child may become increasingly aggressive, tense, unresponsive or show other signs of distress. Any sexualised behaviour should be noted</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Describe what you have observed factually
<p>Child's Language The child may not have the language/be afraid to verbalise clearly what is happening. They may however drop hints or refer to what is happening obliquely.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Record child's exact words, not the adult equivalents
<p>Child's Drawings, Writing or Play A young child may show few signs of abuse when he/she experiences a sense of security in a busy, structured classroom setting therefore careful observation of the child in less formal or unstructured settings are important. Always include the context in your record e.g. 'when returning from the PE Room', 'during small break', 'when lining up for home time.'</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Remember context can be very important
<p>Mood changes Child may, for example, become quiet and tense towards end of day or if collected by a certain adult. This might also happen on certain days or before certain activities. Again, remember to include the context in your recording.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Note time, context and situation – facts only

Remember monitoring should be systematic, continuous and requires perseverance



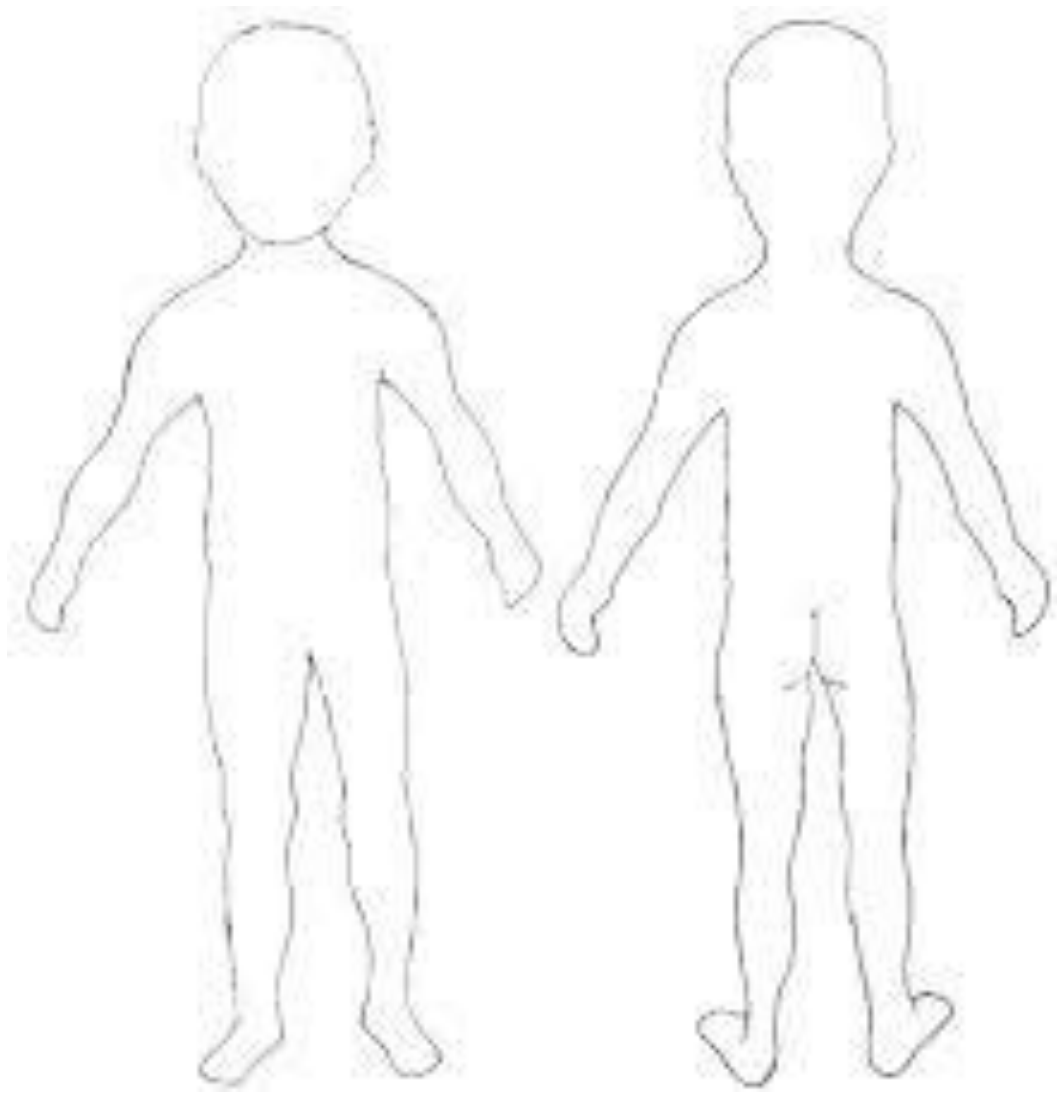
Appendix 10

Record Sheet

Code		
Date	Observation	Signed

Code	Date
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Indicate signs of injury, on the outline below



Signed:



Appendix 12

Record for Child Protection Conference

Child's Details	Name: Age:
Academic Performance:	Work and attainments during the year: Any significant changes from previous years:
Behaviour:	School yard: Classroom: Any significant changes in behaviour:
Social Skills:	Interaction with adults/peers: Does child interact with own age, younger, older children: Does the child have a friend/group of friends:
Talents and activities:	Any activities child engaged with:
Schooling issues:	Attendance, clothes, sleep, lunches, school essentials, homework: Parental involvement with education: Concerns regarding behaviour: Other children in family:
Educational assessment	Child's progress, future needs

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