

# **Child Safeguarding Statement**

## **Mercy Primary School**

### **Chapel Lane**

#### **Birr**

**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 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 Barbara Hanamy
- 3 The Deputy Designated Liaison Person (Deputy DLP) is Anne Cooney

At the time of creating this policy Mrs Ann Murray is Deputy DLP in the absence of Ms Cooney.

- 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 training
    - The Board of Management maintains records of all staff and Board member training
  - In relation to reporting of child protection concerns to Tusla, all school personnel are required to adhere to the procedures set out in the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017, including in the case of registered teachers, those in relation to mandated reporting under the Children First Act 2015.
  - In this school the Board has appointed the abovenamed 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.
  - All registered teachers employed by the school are mandated persons under the Children First Act 2015.
  - In accordance with the Children First Act 2015, the Board has carried out an assessment of any potential for harm to a child while attending the school or participating in school activities. A written assessment setting out the areas of risk identified and the school’s procedures for managing those risks is attached as an appendix to these procedures.
  - The various procedures referred to in this Statement can be accessed via the school’s website, the DES website or will be made available on request by the school.
- 6 This statement has been published on the school’s website and has been provided to all members of school personnel, the Parents’ Association (if any) and the patron. It is readily accessible to parents and guardians on request. A copy of this Statement will be made available to Tusla and the Department if requested.
- 7 This Child Safeguarding Statement will be reviewed annually or as soon as practicable after there has been a material change in any matter to which this statement refers.

This Child Safeguarding Statement was adopted by the Board of Management on \_\_\_\_\_ [date].

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Chairperson of Board of Management

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Child Safeguarding Risk Assessment  
(of any potential harm)**

<b>List of School Activities</b>	<b>Risk Level</b>	<b>The School has identified the following Risk of Harm</b>	<b>The School has the following Procedures in place to address risk identified in this assessment</b>
Training of school personnel in Child Protection matters	High	Harm not recognised or reported promptly	<p>Child Safeguarding Statement &amp; DES procedures made available to all staff</p> <p>DLP&amp; DDLP to attend PDST face to face training All Staff to view Túsla training module &amp; any other online training offered by PDST</p> <p>BOM records all records of staff and board training</p>
One to one teaching	Med	Harm by school personnel	<p>School has policy and clear procedures in place for one to one teaching</p> <p>Open doors</p> <p>Table between teacher and pupil</p> <p>Glass in window</p>
Care of Children with special needs, including intimate care needs	High	Harm by school personnel Bullying	<p>The school has a Special Educational Needs policy</p> <p>The school has a policy on intimate care needs for children</p> <p>Anti-bullying Policy</p>
Toilet areas	High	Inappropriate behaviour / inadequate supervision	<p>The school has a Supervision policy to ensure appropriate supervision of children in this area.</p>
Curricular Provision in respect of SPHE, RSE, Stay safe.	Med	Non-teaching of same	<p>School implements SPHE, RSE and Stay Safe in full.</p> <p>Stay Safe Programme at the beginning of Term 2 each year.</p>
Use of toilet/changing areas in schools	High	Harm by another child/children Harm from a member of school personnel Inadequate supervision	<p>Supervision Policy to ensure there is adequate supervision in these areas</p> <p>Anti-bullying Policy</p> <p>Code of behaviour for all children</p>
Prevention and dealing with bullying amongst pupils	High	Harm from another child/children	<p>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</p>

<b>List of School Activities</b>		<b>The School has identified the following Risk of Harm</b>	<b>The School has the following Procedures in place to address risk identified in this assessment</b>
Daily arrival and dismissal of pupils	Med	Harm from older pupils, known and unknown adults on the playground	Playground supervised from 9am and dismissal supervised by teachers/SNAs
Managing of challenging behaviour amongst pupils, including appropriate use of restraint	Med	Injury to pupils and staff	The school has a Health & Safety Policy The school has a Code Of Behaviour for all children
Use of external personnel to supplement the curriculum and the use of external sport's coaches.	Med	Harm to pupils	The school has in place a Policy & Procedures for the use of external sport's coaches and external persons to supplement the delivery of the curriculum
Recreation breaks for pupils	High	Injury to children Bullying Inadequate supervision	The school has a Supervision policy The school has an Anti-Bullying Policy The school has a Health and Safety Policy
Classroom teaching	Med	Harm by school personnel	School has a code of conduct for school personnel The school complies with the agreed disciplinary procedures for teaching staff.
Outdoor teaching activities	Med	Inadequate supervision of children while attending out of school activities Risk of harm due to non-adherence or inconsistency in applying the Code of Behaviour	School has a Supervision Policy Code of Behaviour for all pupils
Sporting Activities	Med	Harm by other students Inadequate supervision	Clear procedures in place for attending sporting activities Supervision policy
Administration of Medicine Administration of First Aid	High	Risk of incorrect/inappropriate medication being administered	Clear Policy and Procedures in place for administration of medication and first aid to pupils Designated, trained staff for the administration of specific medications

<b>List of School Activities</b>		<b>The School has identified the following Risk of Harm</b>	<b>The School has the following Procedures in place to address risk identified in this assessment</b>
Annual Sports Day	High	Harm by another child/children Harm from a member of school personnel Inadequate supervision	Supervision Policy School has clear procedures for Sports Day
Visitors entering School	Med	Harm to children from unknown persons	CCTV in school Visitors must sign in at the office
Fundraising events involving pupils	Low	Inadequate supervision	Supervision policy
Use of off-site facilities for school activities	Med	Inadequate supervision	Supervision policy
School transport arrangements including use of bus escorts	Low	Harm from school personnel	School has procedures in place re use of school transport. Child Safeguarding Statement given to all staff, including bus escort.
Care of pupils with specific vulnerabilities/needs such as <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pupils from ethnic minorities/migrants</li> <li>• Members of the Traveller community</li> <li>• Lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBT) children</li> <li>• Pupils perceived to be LGBT</li> <li>• Pupils of minority religious faiths</li> <li>• Children in care</li> <li>• Children on CPNS</li> </ul>	Med	Bullying	The school has an Anti-Bullying Policy which fully adheres to the requirements of the Departments Anti-Bullying Procedures. The school has in place a Code of Behaviour for all students.
Participation in Religious ceremonies external to the school	Low		

<p>Recruitment of school personnel including -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teachers</li> <li>• SNAs</li> <li>• Caretaker/Secretary/Cleaners</li> <li>• Sports coaches</li> <li>• External Tutors/Guest Speakers</li> <li>• Volunteers/Parents in school activities</li> </ul>	High	<p>Risk of harm not being recognised by school personnel</p> <p>Harm not recognised or properly or promptly reported</p>	<p>Supervision policy to ensure children are constantly supervised while out at this activity</p> <p>Child Safeguarding Statement &amp; DES procedures made available to all staff</p> <p>School adheres to the requirements of the Garda Vetting legislation and relevant DES circulars in respect of recruitment</p> <p>Staff to view Tusla training module &amp; any other online training offered by PDST</p> <p>Vetting Procedures</p> <p>Procedures in place for Parents / Volunteers</p>
<p>Use of Information and Communication Technology by pupils in school including iPads and phones</p>	High	<p>Bullying</p> <p>Child inappropriately accessing social media while at school</p> <p>Inappropriate communications between child and another child or adult through use of phone/tablet/other device</p>	<p>ICT policy</p> <p>Anti-Bullying Policy</p> <p>Code of Behaviour</p> <p>School has a Mobile Phone Policy in respect of usage by pupils</p>
<p>Application of sanctions under the school's Code of Behaviour including detention of pupils, confiscation of phones etc.</p>	Low	<p>Harm by school personnel</p>	<p>Staff adhere to procedures in Code of Behaviour</p>
<p>Students participating in work experience in the school</p>	Low	<p>Inappropriate contact between child and student teacher</p> <p>Harm by student</p>	<p>Work Experience guidelines</p> <p>School adheres to the requirements of the Garda Vetting legislation.</p> <p>The school has a Child Safeguarding Statement. Students will never be left unsupervised with a child or class</p>

Student teachers undertaking training placement in school	Med	Inadequate supervision Inconsistency on the part of the student teacher in implementing the Code of Behaviour	Child Safeguarding Statement & DES procedures made available to all work experience students Work experience guidelines
Use of video/photography/other media to record school events	High	Risk of harm by photographs/videos being circulated on social media	ICT policy and publishing of photographs/media Anti-bullying Policy Enrolment Registration Form

**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 *[insert date]*. It will 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