

## **MERCY PRIMARY SCHOOL**

### **Child Safeguarding Statement**

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 Addendum to Children First \(2019\)](#), 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 [insert school name] 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 **ANN MURRAY**
- 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.

The school will also adhere to the above principles in relation to any pupil with a special vulnerability.

- 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 DE 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 DE 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 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 schools 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 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 DE 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 June 16th 2021

This Child Safeguarding Statement was reviewed by the Board of Management on June 16th 2021

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 Mercy Primary 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 Post-Primary Schools 2017*, the following is the Written Risk Assessment of [name of school].

<b>1. List of School Activities</b>	<b>2. The school has identified the following risk of harm in respect of its activities –</b>	<b>3. The School has the following Procedures in place to address the risks identified in this assessment -</b>
Training of school personnel in Child Protection matters	Harm not recognised or reported promptly	Child Safeguarding Statement & DES procedures made available to all staff  DLP& DDLP to attend PDST face to face training All Staff to view Túsla training module & any other online training offered by PDST  BOM records all records of staff and board training
One to one teaching	Harm by school personnel	School has policy and clear procedures in place for one to one teaching Open doors Table between teacher and pupil Glass in window
Care of Children with special needs, including intimate care needs	Harm by school personnel Bullying	The school has a Special Educational Needs policy The school has a policy on intimate care needs for children Anti-bullying Policy
Toilet areas	Inappropriate behaviour / inadequate supervision	The school has a Supervision policy to ensure appropriate supervision of children in this area.
Curricular Provision in respect of SPHE, RSE, Stay safe.	Non-teaching of same	School implements SPHE, RSE and Stay Safe in full. Stay Safe Programme at the beginning of Term 2 each year.
Use of toilet/changing areas in schools	Harm by another child/children Harm from a member of school personnel Inadequate supervision	Supervision Policy to ensure there is adequate supervision in these areas Anti-bullying Policy Code of behaviour for all children

Prevention and dealing with bullying amongst pupils	Harm from another child/children	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
Daily arrival and dismissal of pupils	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	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.	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	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	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	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	Harm by other students Inadequate supervision	Clear procedures in place for attending sporting activities Supervision policy
Annual Sports Day DEIS Summer Camp	Harm by another child/children Harm from a member of school personnel Inadequate supervision	Supervision Policy School has clear procedures for Sports Day School has clear procedures for DEIS Summer Camp
Visitors entering School	Harm to children from unknown persons	CCTV in school Visitors must sign in at the office
Fundraising events involving pupils	Inadequate supervision	Supervision policy

<p>Use of off-site facilities for school activities</p>	<p>Inadequate supervision</p>	<p>Supervision policy</p>
<p>School transport arrangements including use of bus escorts</p>	<p>Harm from school personnel</p>	<p>School has procedures in place re use of school transport. Child Safeguarding Statement given to all staff, including bus escort.</p>
<p>Care of pupils with specific vulnerabilities/needs such as</p> <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>	<p>Bullying</p>	<p>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.</p>
<p>Participation in Religious ceremonies external to the school</p> <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>	<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 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>

		Procedures in place for Parents / Volunteers
Use of Information and Communication Technology by pupils in school including iPads and phones	Bullying Child inappropriately accessing social media while at school Inappropriate communications between child and another child or adult through use of phone/tablet/other device	ICT policy Anti-Bullying Policy Code of Behaviour School has a Mobile Phone Policy in respect of usage by pupils
Application of sanctions under the school's Code of Behaviour including detention of pupils, confiscation of phones etc.	Harm by school personnel	Staff adhere to procedures in Code of Behaviour
Students participating in work experience in the school	Inappropriate contact between child and student teacher Harm by student	Work Experience guidelines School adheres to the requirements of the Garda Vetting legislation. The school has a Child Safeguarding Statement. Students will never be left unsupervised with a child or class
Student teachers undertaking training placement in school	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	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.

### **Examples of School Activities**

- Daily arrival and dismissal of pupils
- Recreation breaks for pupils
- Classroom teaching
- One-to-one teaching
- One-to one learning support
- One-to-one counselling
- Outdoor teaching activities
- Online teaching and learning remotely
- Sporting Activities
- School outings
- School trips involving overnight stay
- School trips involving foreign travel
- Use of toilet/changing/shower areas in schools
- Provision of residential facilities for boarders
- Annual Sports Day
- Fundraising events involving pupils
- Use of off-site facilities for school activities
- School transport arrangements including use of bus escorts
- Care of children with special educational needs, including intimate care where needed,
- Care of any vulnerable adult students, including intimate care where needed
- Management of challenging behaviour amongst pupils, including appropriate use of restraint where required
- Management of provision of food and drink
- Administration of Medicine
- Administration of First Aid
- Curricular provision in respect of SPHE, RSE, Stay Safe



- 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
  - Lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBT) children
  - Pupils perceived to be LGBT
  - Pupils of minority religious faiths
  - Children in care
  - Children on CPNS
  - Children with medical needs
- Recruitment of school personnel including -
  - Teachers/SNA's
  - Caretaker/Secretary/Cleaners
  - Sports coaches
  - External Tutors/Guest Speakers
  - Volunteers/Parents in school activities
  - Visitors/contractors present in school during school hours
  - Visitors/contractors present during after school activities
- Participation by pupils in religious ceremonies/religious instruction external to the school
- Use of Information and Communication Technology by pupils in school, including social media
- 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
- Students from the school participating in work experience elsewhere
- Student teachers undertaking training placement in school
- Use of video/photography/other media to record school events
- After school use of school premises by other organisations
- Use of school premises by other organisation during school day

- Breakfast club
- Homework club/evening study

### **Examples of Risks of Harm**

- Risk of harm not being recognised by school personnel
- Risk of harm not being reported properly and promptly by school personnel
- Risk of child being harmed in the school by a member of school personnel
- Risk of child being harmed in the school by another child
- Risk of child being harmed in the school by volunteer or visitor to the school
- 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
- Risk of harm due to inappropriate use of online remote teaching and learning communication platform such as an uninvited person accessing the lesson link, students being left unsupervised for long periods of time in breakout rooms
- Risk of harm due to bullying of child
- Risk of harm due to racism
- Risk of harm due to inadequate supervision of children in school
- Risk of harm due to inadequate supervision of children while attending out of school activities
- Risk of harm due to inappropriate relationship/communications between child and another child or adult
- Risk of harm due to children inappropriately accessing/using computers, social media, phones and other devices while at school
- Risk of harm to children with SEN who have particular vulnerabilities, including medical vulnerabilities
- Risk of harm to child while a child is receiving intimate care
- Risk of harm due to inadequate code of behaviour
- Risk of harm in one-to-one teaching, counselling, coaching situation
- 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
- Risk of harm caused by member of school personnel accessing/circulating inappropriate material via social media, texting, digital device or other manner

**Examples of Procedures to address risks of harm**

- All school personnel are provided with a copy of the school's *Child Safeguarding Statement*
- The *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017* are made available to all school personnel
- School Personnel are required to adhere to the *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017* and all registered teaching staff are required to adhere to the *Children First Act 2015* and its Addendum (2019)
- The school implements in full the Stay Safe Programme
- The school implements in full the SPHE curriculum
- The school implements in full the Wellbeing Programme at Junior Cycle
- The school has an Anti-Bullying Policy which fully adheres to the requirements of the Department's *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*
- The school undertakes anti-racism awareness initiatives
- The school has a yard/playground supervision policy to ensure appropriate supervision of children during, assembly, dismissal and breaks and in respect of specific areas such as toilets, changing rooms etc.
- The school has in place a policy and 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 DE circulars in relation to recruitment and Garda vetting
- The school has a codes of conduct for school personnel (teaching and non-teaching staff)
- The school complies with the agreed disciplinary procedures for teaching staff
- The school has a Special Educational Needs policy
- The school has an intimate care policy/plan in respect of students who require such care
- The school has in place a policy and procedures for the administration of medication to pupils
- 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 policy and procedures for the administration of First Aid
- The school has in place a code of behaviour for pupils
- The school has an Acceptable Use Policy in place, to include provision for online teaching and learning remotely, and has communicated this policy to parents
- The school has in place a policy governing the use of smart phones and tables devices in the school by pupils as per circular 38/2018
- The school has in place a Critical Incident Management Plan
- The school has in place a Home School Liaison policy and related procedures
- The school has in place a policy and procedures for the use of external persons to supplement delivery of the curriculum
- The school has in place a policy and procedures for the use of external sports coaches
- The school has in place a policy and 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 a policy and procedures in respect of student teacher placements
- The school has in place a policy and procedures in respect of students undertaking work experience in the school
- The school has in place a policy and procedures in respect of pupils of the school undertaking work experience in external organisations