

Mandatory Template 1: Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment Template

Child Safeguarding Statement

Holy Cross National School is a primary/special/post-primary school providing primary/post-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 \(revised 2023\)](#) and [Tusla Guidance on the preparation of Child Safeguarding Statements](#), the Board of Management of Holy Cross 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 Ailish Dunne
- 3 The Deputy Designated Liaison Person (Deputy DLP) is Joseph Meagher
- 4 The Relevant Person is Ailish Dunne
- 5 The Board of Management recognises that child protection and welfare considerations permeate all aspects of school life and must be reflected in all of the school's policies, procedures, practices and activities. In its policies, procedures, practices and activities, the school will adhere to the following principles of best practice in child protection and welfare:

The school will:

- recognise that the protection and welfare of children is of paramount importance, regardless of all other considerations;
- fully comply with its statutory obligations under the Children First Act 2015 and other relevant legislation relating to the protection and welfare of children;
- fully co-operate with the relevant statutory authorities in relation to child protection and welfare matters;
- adopt safe practices to minimise the possibility of harm or accidents happening to children and protect workers from the necessity to take unnecessary risks that may leave themselves open to accusations of abuse or neglect;
- develop a practice of openness with parents and encourage parental involvement in the education of their children; and
- fully respect confidentiality requirements in dealing with child protection matters.

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

- 6 The following procedures/measures are in place:
 - In relation to any member of staff who is the subject of any investigation (howsoever described) in respect of any act, omission or circumstance in respect of a child attending the school, the school adheres to the relevant procedures set out in Chapter 7 of the *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools (revised 2023)* and to the relevant agreed disciplinary procedures for school staff which are published on the gov.ie website.

- In relation to the selection or recruitment of staff and their suitability to work with children, the school adheres to the statutory vetting requirements of the [National Vetting Bureau \(Children and Vulnerable Persons\) Acts 2012 to 2016](#) and to the wider duty of care guidance set out in relevant Garda vetting and recruitment circulars published by the Department of Education and available on the gov.ie website.
- In relation to the provision of information and, where necessary, instruction and training, to staff in respect of the identification of the occurrence of harm (as defined in the 2015 Act) the school-
 - Has provided each member of staff with a copy of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement
 - Ensures all new staff are provided with a copy of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement
 - Encourages staff to avail of relevant training
 - Encourages Board of Management members to avail of relevant training
 - The Board of Management maintains records of all staff and Board member training
- In relation to reporting of child protection concerns to Tusla, all school personnel are required to adhere to the procedures set out in the *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools (revised 2023)*, including in the case of registered teachers, those in relation to mandated reporting under the Children First Act 2015.
- All registered teachers employed by the school are mandated persons under the Children First Act 2015.
- In accordance with the Children First Act 2015 and the Addendum to Children First (2019), the Board has carried out an assessment of any potential for harm to a child while attending the school or participating in school activities. A written assessment setting out the areas of risk identified and the school's procedures for managing those risks is included with the Child Safeguarding Statement.
- The various procedures referred to in this Statement can be accessed via the school's website, the gov.ie website or will be made available on request by the school.

Note: The above is not intended as an exhaustive list. Individual Boards of Management shall also include in this section such other procedures/measures that are of relevance to the school in question.

- 7 This statement has been published on the school's website and has been provided to all members of school personnel, the Parents' Association (if any) and the patron. It is readily accessible to parents and guardians on request. A copy of this Statement will be made available to Tusla and the Department if requested.
- 8 This Child Safeguarding Statement will be reviewed annually or as soon as practicable after there has been a material change in any matter to which this statement refers.

This Child Safeguarding Statement was adopted by the Board of Management on the 11th October 2023.

This Child Safeguarding Statement was reviewed by the Board of Management on the 11th October 2023.

Signed: 

Chairperson of Board of Management

Date: 11/10/23

Signed: 

Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management

Date: 11/10/23

Child Safeguarding Risk Assessment

Written Assessment of Risk of Holy Cross National School 18643S

In accordance with section 11 of the Children First Act 2015 and with the requirements of Chapter 8 of the *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools (revised 2023)*, the following is the Written Risk Assessment of Holy Cross National School.

1. List 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
- Use of toilet areas in school and hall
- Annual Sports Day
- Fundraising events involving pupils
- School transport arrangements including the use of bus drivers
- Use of off-site facilities for school activities
- 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
- 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
 - from ethnic minorities/migrants
 - Members of the Traveller community
 - Lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBT) children
 - Children perceived to be LGBT
 - Pupils of minority religious faiths
 - Children in care
 - Children on Tusla's Child Protection Notification System (CPNS)
 - Children with medical needs
- Recruitment of school personnel including
- Participation by pupils in religious ceremonies external to the school
- Students participating in work experience in the school
- Student teachers undertaking training placement in the school

- 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.
- Use of video/photography/other media to record school events
- After school use of school premises by other organisations

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 (Child Protection Notification System)

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

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

- Risk of harm not being recognised by school personnel
- Risk of harm not being reported properly and promptly by school personnel
- Risk of a child being harmed in the school by a member of school personnel
- Risk of a child being harmed in the school by another child
- Risk of a child being harmed in the school by volunteer or visitor to the school
- Risk of a child being harmed in the school 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 a child by a member of staff/volunteer/peer
- 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 of a child through the use of unauthorised photography
- Risk of harm due to children inappropriately accessing/using computers, social media, phones and other devices while at school (as defined in the CFA 2015)
- Risk of harm to children with SEN who have particular vulnerabilities
- Risk of harm to child when child is receiving intimate care

- Risk of harm due to inadequate Code of Behaviour
- Risk of harm in one-to-one teaching, 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
- Risk of harm due to outside threat
- Risk of harm due to proximity to farmland and forest area
- Risk of harm due to increased heavy road traffic
- Risk of flight due to low wall and stile at the front of school

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***

- Yes
The *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools (revised 2023)* are made available to all school personnel:
Hard copy given to all school personnel at the start of the new academic year or when changes have occurred in policy.

The ***Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools (revised 2023)*** are made available to all school personnel.

- Yes

School Personnel are required to adhere to the *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools (revised 2023)* and all registered teaching staff are required to adhere to the ***Children First Act 2015*** and its Addendum (2019).

- Adopted by Holycross NS on 11/10/2023

The school implements in full the ***Stay Safe Programme***

- The *Stay Safe Programme* is implemented in its entirety on a whole school basis
- *Programmes are devised/organised between shared-class teachers to ensure implementation.*

The school implements in full the **SPHE** curriculum

- SPHE Whole School Plan has been revised and updated(11/10/23)
- SPHE is included in all short and long term planning
- Sensitive RSE modules are delivered by all class teachers bi-annually

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.

- Yes

Cross NS, the following options only are utilised:

(a) One-to-one teaching will take place in a room with a glass panel in the door

(b) One-to-one teaching will take place in the open-doored Resource room

(c) If a child needs one-to-one teaching, parents will be advised of any arrangement in place

- *Teachers are required to adhere to the Code of Professional Conduct for Teachers published by the Teaching Council in accordance with section 7(2)(b) of the Teaching Council Acts, 2001-2015*

Policy and procedures for **Visitors/Contractors**

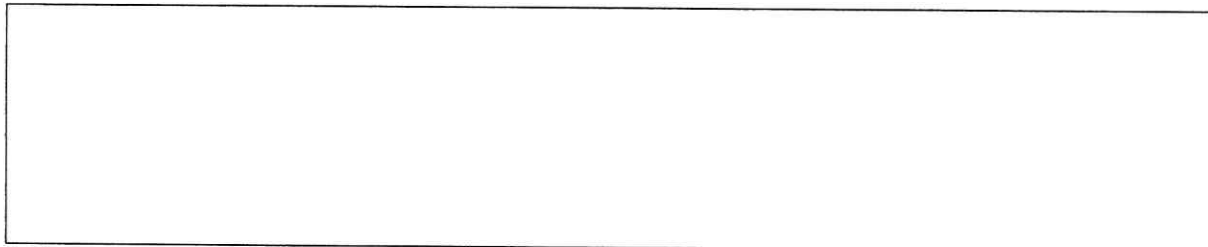
- *Yes: Health and safety Policy*
- *All parents and visitors can only access the school via a main door at the school office. Upon being granted access they must then report to the secretary's office.*

Policy and procedures in respect of **Student Teacher Placement**

- *The student will be under Teacher Supervision at all times*
- *Students must produce evidence of Garda Vetting*
- *Students must produce evidence of insurance from their education institution*
- *Student Teacher Policy drawn up and to be ratified*

Policy and procedures in respect of students undertaking **Work Experience** in the school

- *The student will be under Teacher Supervision at all times*
- *Students must produce evidence of Garda Vetting*
- *Students must produce evidence of insurance from their secondary school*
- *Work Experience Policy drawn up and to be ratified*



Important Note: It should be noted that risk in the context of this risk assessment is the risk of “harm” as defined in the Children First Act 2015 and not general health and safety risk. The definition of harm is set out in Chapter 4 of the *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools (revised 2023)*

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 activities, risks and procedures

The examples listed in this document are provided to assist schools in undertaking their risk assessment under the Children First Act, 2015. Schools should note that this list of examples is not intended to be exhaustive. It is the responsibility of each school to ensure, as far as possible, that any other risks and procedures that are relevant to its own particular circumstances are identified and specified in the written risk assessment and that adequate procedures are in place to address all risks identified.

It is acknowledged that schools already have in place a range of policies, practices and procedures to mitigate the risk of harm to children while they are participating in the activities of the school and that some school activities will carry low or minimal risks of harm compared to others. In the context of the risk assessment that must be undertaken by schools, the Children First Act, 2015 refers to risk as “any potential for harm”. Therefore, it is important that, as part of its risk assessment process, each school lists and reviews all of its various activities (which shall include identifying those that may carry low risk of harm as well as those that carry higher risks of harm). Doing so will help the school to (1) identify, as required under the Children First Act, 2015, any risks of harm that may exist in respect of the school’s activities, (2) identify and assess the adequacy of the various procedures already in place to manage those risks of harm and (3) identify and put in place any such additional procedures as are considered necessary to manage any risk identified.

The Addendum to *Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children* published in January 2019 clarifies that organisations providing relevant services to children should consider the specific issue of online safety when carrying out their risk assessment and preparing their Child Safeguarding Statement.

The Guidance on Continuity of Schooling for primary and post-primary schools (April 2020) advises of the importance of teachers maintaining the safe and ethical use of the internet during distance learning and assisting parents and guardians to be aware of their role also.

Schools should ensure that their Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) informs and guides remote or distance learning activity.

Important Note: It should be noted that risk in the context of this risk assessment is the risk of “harm” as defined in the Children First Act, 2015 and not general health and safety risk. The definition of harm is set out in chapter 4 of the *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools (revised 2023)*.

This Child Safeguarding Statement & Risk Assessment was adopted by the Board of Management on the 11th October 2023.

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Signed: 

Chairperson of Board of Management

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