

Child Protection Policy Scoil Bhríde, Mountrath

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, practices and activities. Accordingly, in accordance with the requirements of the Department of Education *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools (revised 2023)*, the Board of Management of ScoilBhríde, Mountrath, has agreed the following child protection policy:

- 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 protection policy.
- The Designated Liaison Person (DLP) is the school principal, Mary Rohan.
- The Deputy Designated Liaison Person (Deputy DLP) is Ms. Tara Sheppard.
- In its policies, practices and activities, Scoil Bhríde, Mountrath, 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 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 Board has ensured that the necessary policies, protocols and practices as appropriate are in place to ensure that Scoil Bhríde, Mountrath fulfils its child protection policy. The Code of Behaviour, Anti-Bullying Policy, Critical Incidents Policy, Health and Safety Policy, Record Keeping and Data Protection, School Attendance, and the Substance Use Policy are likely to be especially relevant to child protection concerns. Child protection issues have been considered in relation to the school's everyday practices, and statements of practice have been recorded, and will be updated and amended as necessary. Those relating to Accidents and Injuries, Daily Supervision practices, Lunch Time Rules and School Tours/Outings, are most likely to have child protection implications.
 - This policy has been made available to school personnel and the Parents' Association and is readily accessible to parents on request. A copy of this policy will be made available to the Department and the patron if requested.
 - This policy will be reviewed by the Board of Management once in every school year.

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on 04/10/2023

Date of next review: October 2024

Child Safeguarding Statement, Scoil Bhríde, Mountrath. Scoil Bhríde 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 \(revised 2023\)](#) and [Tusla Guidance on the preparation of Child Safeguarding Statements](#), the Board of Management of Scoil Bhríde 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 Mary Rohan
- 3 The Deputy Designated Liaison Person (DDL) is Tara Sheppard
- 4 The Relevant Person is Mary Rohan
(*The relevant person is one who can provide information in respect of how the child safeguarding statement was developed and will be able to provide the statement on request. In a school setting the relevant person shall be the designated liaison person.*)
- 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 04/10/2023.

This Child Safeguarding Statement was reviewed by the Board of Management on 04/10/2023

Signed: David Page

Signed: Mary Rohan

Chairperson of Board of Management

Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management

Date: 04/10/2023.

Date: 04/10/202

Child Safeguarding Risk Assessment

Written Assessment of Risk of Scoil Bhríde, Mountrath.

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 Scoil Bhríde, Mountrath.

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
- Outdoor teaching activities
- Online teaching and learning remotely
- Sporting activities
- School outings / Sacramental preparation in Church
- Use of classroom and hall toilet
- Annual Sports Day
- Using the Active Schools Walkway
- 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
- 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 Tusla's Child Protection Notification System (CPNS)
 - Children with medical needs
- Recruitment of school personnel including -
 - Teachers/SNAs
 - Caretaker/Secretary/Cleaners
 - Sports coaches
 - External Tutors/Guest Speakers

- Volunteers/Parents in school activities
- Visitors/contractors present in school during school hours
- Participation by pupils in religious ceremonies
- Use of Information and Communication Technology by pupils in school
- Application of sanctions under the school's Code of Behaviour
- Students participating in work experience in the school
- Student teachers undertaking training placement in school
- Use of video/photography/other media to record school events
- Homework club
- Summer Camp

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

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 another child or school personnel
- Risk of child being harmed in the school by a 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 the child is participating in out of school activities e.g. school trip, swimming lessons
- Risk of harm due to bullying of child
- Risk of harm due to inadequate supervision of children in school or 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 tablets while at school
- Risk of harm to children with SEN who have particular vulnerabilities
- Risk of harm in one-to-one teaching
- Risk of harm due to inadequate code of behaviour
- Access/Egress to pupils by strangers or other adults

3. The school has the following procedures in place to address the risks of harm identified in this assessment -

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 (revised 2023)* are made available to all school personnel

- 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 it's Addendum (2019)*
- The school implements in full the Stay Safe Programme
- The school implements in full the SPHE curriculum
- The school has an Anti-Bullying Policy which fully adheres to the requirements of the Department's *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*
- The school has a yard/playground supervision policy to ensure appropriate supervision of children during, assembly, dismissal and breaks and in respect of specific areas such as toilets
- The school has in place a policy and clear procedures in respect of school outings
- The school has a Health & Safety Policy (use of Zebra Crossings in the town), children supervised using the Active Schools Walkway
- 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 Code of Conduct for school personnel (teaching and non-teaching staff)
- The school complies with the agreed disciplinary procedures for teaching staff
- The school has a Special Educational Needs policy
- The school has in place a policy and procedures for the administration of medication to pupils
- The school:
 - Has provided each member of the 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 in place 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 tablet 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 the 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, glass panels in doors
- 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
- Designated persons only authorised to collect children from school
- Entry to school only by Buzz In system, sign in and sign out book in front porch

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.