

Child Safeguarding Statement

Our Lady's Grove is a post primary girl's school. In accordance with 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, our Board of Management has formally adopted and will implement fully and without modification the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools 2017, as part of this overall Child Safeguarding Statement. School authorities and school personnel are required to adhere to these revised procedures in dealing with allegations or suspicions of child abuse.

It is our duty to keep children safe from harm while they are availing of our educational and associated school activities.

"harm" in relation to a child means

- (a) Assault, ill treatment or neglect of a 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*

This Child Safety Statement specifies the principles and procedures to be observed to ensure, as far as is practicable, students in our school are safe from harm. It also includes an assessment risk of harm and specifies the procedures in place to manage any identified risks.

Risk Assessment

In accordance with s(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, a complete risk assessment has been carried out and discussed amongst representatives of all school community members. It is attached here at appendix 1.

Addressing the risk of harm

All school personnel are provided with a copy of the school's Safeguarding Statement and made aware of Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools 2017. **All staff members must sign a declaration confirming knowledge, acceptance and support of the policy.**

Policies currently in place and implemented to safeguard children from harm

- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Attendance Policy
- Code of Behaviour
- Code of Professional Conduct and Practice
- Critical Incident Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Dignity at Work Policy
- Guidance Policy and Plan
- Healthy Lifestyle and Life Skills Policy
- Pastoral Care Policy
- Policy and Procedures regarding the Management of First Aid
- School Trip Policy
- Search Policy
- Security and Safety Policy
- Smoke Free Policy
- SPHE Policy
- Student Teacher Placement Policy
- Substance Misuse Policy
- Technology Acceptable Use Policy
- Vetting Policy
- Wellbeing Statement of Practice

The above policies are reviewed to take account of changes in legislation and in line with best practice. The school implements the full SPHE programme, the Wellbeing programme and RSE in senior cycle. In order to manage potential risks, practices and procedures have been put in place to minimize such risks.

Recruitment Practices

In order to ensure the recruitment of staff suitable to work with children the following actions will be taken

- Interviewees will be asked questions pertaining to Child Protection at Interview.
- References will be sought and any unexplained absences in a Curriculum Vitae or Application Form will be queried
- All prospective employees will be vetted – any person who refuses to be vetted will not be appointed in any capacity including a voluntary role.
- The Child Protection related Statutory declaration and Form of Undertaking must be provided to the school authorities by all teaching and non-teaching persons appointed
- All employees will be inducted in our Child Protection policy and practices
- Persons involved in external extra-curricular activities (coaching , First Aid, transport) will be vetted and required to provide a statutory declaration.

Operational Practices

- Child safeguarding material will be displayed prominently in the public area at the front of the school
- Teachers speaking to students on a one-to-one will do so with the classroom door open or on the corridor
- Teachers involved in supervision will actively monitor classrooms and corridors
- Students are not permitted to use toilets outside of breaktimes
- The school has a Special Educational Needs policy
- The school has a Guidance plan
- The school has a Critical Incident policy and plan
- Glass panels are provided in all classroom doors
- Our Code of Professional Conduct and Practice supports our Child Safeguarding Statement
- Our code of behaviour, anti-bullying and AUP policies support our child Safeguarding Statement
- All teachers are Mandated Persons under the Act and a list of mandated persons will be compiled on an annual basis at the beginning of each academic year
- The school adheres to all Garda vetting legislation and relevant DES circulars when recruiting
- All staff will be familiar with reporting procedures to TUSLA
- Teachers will be present if external speakers are invited to the school
- The school has a health and safety policy
- The school will fully cooperate with all relevant authorities

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 risks of harm the school has in place the procedures listed in this risk assessment to manage and reduce risk to the greatest possible extent.

The Risk Assessment has been completed by the Board of Management on Monday 12th March 2018. 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 Board of Management

Safeguarding Statement

The Designated Liaison Person (DLP) is the Principal. The DLP is appointed as the “relevant person” under s. (11) of the Children First Act 2015 and is the first point of contact in respect of the school’s safeguarding statement.

The Deputy Designated Liaison Person (Deputy DLP) is the Deputy Principal

The Board of Management recognizes 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. These policies, procedures, practices, and activities will adhere to the following principles of best practice in child protection and welfare:

The school will:

- Recognize that the protection and welfare of our students 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 cooperate with the relevant statutory authorities in relation to child protection and welfare matters
- Adopt safe practices to minimize 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
- Fully respect confidentiality requirements in dealing with child protection matters

The following procedures/measures are in place:

Our Child Safeguarding Statement has been developed in line with the requirements under the Children First Act 2015, the Children First: National Guidance, Tusla’s Child Safeguarding: A Guide for Policy, Procedure and Practice. In addition to the procedures listed in our risk assessment, the following procedures support our intention to safeguard children while they are availing of our service:

Procedure for the management of allegations of abuse or misconduct against workers/volunteers

In relation to any member of staff who is the subject of any investigation 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.

Procedure for the safe recruitment and selection of staff and volunteers

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.

Procedure for the provision of and access to child safeguarding training and information, including the identification of the occurrence of harm

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
- Ensures staff members are provided with relevant TUSLA/PDST training and sign a written declaration to confirm training and knowledge of child safeguarding
- Encourages Board of Management members to avail of relevant training
- The Board of Management maintains records of all staff and Board member training

Procedure for the reporting of child protection or welfare concerns to Tusla

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

Procedure for maintaining a list of persons who are mandated

All registered teachers employed by the school are mandated persons under the Children First Act 2015 and a list will be updated at the beginning of every academic year.

Procedure for appointing a relevant person

The Board has appointed the Principal (DLP) as the “relevant person” for the purpose of this Safeguarding Statement.

Implementation

We recognize that implementation is an ongoing process. We are committed to the implementation of this Child safeguarding Statement and the procedures that support our intention to keep children safe while availing of our service. 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 form part of this Safeguarding Statement.

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.

This Child Safeguarding Statement has been published on the school’s website and has been provided to all members of school personnel, the parents and Le Cheile. A copy of this Statement will be made available to Tusla and the Department if requested.

It 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 12th March 2018.

Signed:_____

Chairperson BOM

Signed:_____

Principal/Secretary BOM