

## **Mandatory Template 1: Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment Template**

### **Child Safeguarding Statement**

Our Lady's Grove is a post-primary school providing post-primary education to pupils from First Year to Leaving Certificate Year. 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 Our Lady's Grove 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 Colm Dooley
  - 3 The Deputy Designated Liaison Person (Deputy DLP) is Sonya Lyons
  - 4 The Relevant Person is Colm Dooley  
*(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 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 (Revised 2023), 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 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.

**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 25/1/2024

This Child Safeguarding Statement was reviewed by the Board of Management on 25/1/2024.

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

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

Chairperson of Board of Management

Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management

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

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

## Child Safeguarding Risk Assessment

### Written Assessment of Risk of Our Lady's Grove Secondary School

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 Our Lady's Grove.

#### 1. List of school activities

Classroom teaching,  
One to one teaching  
One to one counselling  
Outdoor teaching activities  
Recreation breaks  
Sporting activities  
School outings  
School Trips  
Use of toilet/changing facilities  
Use of off-site facilities for school activities  
Care of children with specific vulnerabilities or special educational needs  
Administration of medicine/First Aid  
Curricular provision in respect of SPHE,RSE  
Risk of harm due to bullying of a student  
Risk of harm due to inadequate supervision  
Use of external personnel to supplement curriculum/visiting speakers  
Recruitment of school personnel  
Visitors/contractors present in school during school hours or during after school activities  
Use of Information and communication technology by students in school and risk of harm due to children inappropriately accessing/using computers, social media, phones and other devices while in school  
Application of sanctions under the school's Code of Behaviour including detention of students  
Students participating in work experience in the school or elsewhere  
Students participating in community work in the school or elsewhere  
Student teachers undertaking training placement in the school  
Use of various media to record school events  
Evening study  
Students travelling on privately run school bus

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

Potential Risks to our students may result from an act, omission or circumstance in respect of an encounter with any adult or other student either while in school or involved in a school activity.

The school has identified the following risk of harm in respect of its activities:

The risk of a child being harmed in the school by a member of school personnel

The risk of a child being harmed in the school by another child

The risk of a child being harmed in the school by a volunteer or visitor to the school

The risk of a child being harmed by a member of school personnel or anyone else while participating in out of school activities

The risk of harm due to inadequate supervision in school or while attending out of school activities

The risk of harm due to inappropriate relationship/ communication between a child and another child or adult

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

The risk of harm due to bullying of a vulnerable child both online and in person

The risk of members/leaders of external bodies/organisations effecting a harmful influence on a student which then becomes apparent in school life.

Risk of harm due to students inappropriately accessing/using technology/social media while in school

Risk of harm in one-to-one teaching, counselling, coaching situation

Risk of harm caused by a member of school personnel communicating with students in an inappropriate manner via social media, texting or other manner

Risk of harm caused by a member of school personnel accessing /circulating inappropriate material via social media, texting or other manner.

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

In assessing any potential harm to a student in our care the following practices and procedures have been developed to minimize potential risk.

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 (Revised 2023). **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 School Charter
- 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
- RSE Policy
- Student Teacher Placement Policy
- Substance Misuse Policy
- Technology Acceptable Use Policy
- Vetting Policy

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 persons appointed
- All employees will be inducted in our Child Protection policy and practices
- Persons involved in external extra-curricular activities (coaching, First Aid) will be vetted

#### **Operational Practices**

- All external access is prohibited using buzzer access at school's front door
- Teachers speaking to students on a one-to-one will do so with the classroom door open or on the corridor
- Teachers are advised to leave classroom doors open during teaching sessions
- The school employs Compass Kiosk to monitor arrivals and departures via an individual swipe card.
- Teachers involved in supervision will actively monitor classrooms and corridors
- Our supervision rota provides for appropriate supervision of classrooms, corridors and bathrooms during break periods.
- Senior leaders regularly supervise corridor areas during class periods.
- All Ipads are monitored in school and closed to external downloads via the JAMF System
- In-school internet access is heavily filtered to ensure only access to appropriate sites. This is regularly reviewed
- Glass panels are provided in all classroom doors
- Our Code of Professional Conduct and Practice supports 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
- All staff will be familiar with reporting procedures to TUSLA
- Teachers will be present if external speakers are invited to the school
- Our school implements the DES's SPHE programme in full
- All students complete the Fuse Anti-Bullying Programme
- The school will fully cooperate with all relevant authorities

**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.

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

Chairperson of Board of Management

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

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

Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management

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