



## **St. Fergus NS, Glin, Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment**

### **October 2023**

### **Child Safeguarding Statement**

St. Fergus National School is a primary school providing primary education to pupils from Junior Infants to Sixth Class, including two ASD Classes.

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](#), [Tusla Guidance on the preparation of Child Safeguarding Statements](#) and Publication of Child Protection Procedures for Primary and PostPrimary Schools (revised 2023), the Board of Management of St. Fergus 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 2017 as part of this overall Child Safeguarding Statement
- 2 The Designated Liaison Person (DLP) is Mrs. Deirdre Kennelly
- 3 The Deputy Designated Liaison Person (Deputy DLP) is Ms. Deirdre Dillane

- 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 adult 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 school’s 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 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 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2023.

This Child Safeguarding Statement was reviewed by the Board of Management on 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2023.

Signed: *Thomas Barrett*

Signed: *Deirdre Kennelly*

Chairperson of Board of Management

Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management

Date: 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2023

Date: 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2023

## St. Fergus NS Child Safeguarding Risk Assessment

### Written Assessment of Risk of St. Fergus National 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 St Fergus National School

#### List of School Activities

On any given day, pupils within St Fergus' National School engage in any number of school activities. These activities may be within or outside of school grounds. All pupils from Junior Infants to Sixth Class are encouraged to engage in the arranged activity to the best of their ability. School policies apply to all activities whether they are inside or outside of school grounds. Appropriate supervision is always provided for such activities. Below is a list of school activities conducted during the school year. This list is not intended to be exhaustive. All and any risks and procedures which are relevant to circumstances will be identified and specified as they arise. Adequate procedures are in place to address all risks identified.

- Daily arrival and dismissal of pupils – use of pedestrian crossing and new car park layout at these times.
- Recreation breaks for pupils – classroom, shelter, playground and school yard procedures are in place.
- Classroom teaching
- One-to-one teaching
- One to one SET
- One to one counselling
- Outdoor teacher activities
- Use of toilet changing in school
- On line teaching and learning remotely
- Sporting activities
- School Outings
- Group teaching
- One-to-one assessment
- Small group assessment
- Pupils representing the school at quizzes/competitions outside of school grounds e.g. Credit Union Quiz

- Outdoor teaching activities
- Specialised programmes provided to the school by outside agencies e.g. OT Programmes
- Intimate Care of pupils in ASD Classes and in the mainstream classes, including, but not limited to toileting needs
- Use of School Play area by pupils
- Use of the Sensory Room by pupils
- Transitioning between ASD Classes and mainstream classes by all pupils
- Sporting activities
- School outings
- Use of toilet/changing areas in school
- Transitions to/from toilet facilities
- Pupils doing messages/jobs between classes/the office/Halla/on school grounds
- Use of toilet/changing/shower areas while on school outings
- Use of toilet/changing/shower areas while at sporting activities
- Annual Sports Day/Active Week
- Fundraising events involving pupils
- Use of off-site facilities for school activities
- School transport arrangements including every day travel to school and bus escorts
- Care of children with special educational needs, including intimate care where needed
- Care of any vulnerable adult students
- Management of challenging behaviour amongst pupils, including appropriate use of restraint where required
- Management of provision of food and drink
- Administration of Medicines
- Administration of First Aid
- Curricular provision in respect of SPHE, RSE and Stay Safe
- Prevention and dealing with bullying amongst pupils
- Training of school personnel in child protection matters
- Movement/Sensory breaks for pupils during the day
- Visitors from external agencies-NEPS, CAMHS, TUSLA
- Use of external personnel to supplement the 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 and migrants, including Ukraine

- Members of the Travelling Community
- Lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBT) children
- Pupils perceived to be LGBT
- Pupils of minority religious/no faith
- Children in care
- Children on CPNS by TUSLA(Child Protection Notification System)
- Children with medical needs
- Children with Special Education Needs.
  - Children with physical, educational or emotional needs.
- Recruitment of school personnel including
  - Teachers
  - SNAs
  - Secretary
  - Cleaner
  - Caretaker
  - Sports coaches
  - External tutors
  - Guest Speakers
  - Volunteers/Parents on school activities/fundraising activities
  - Visitors/Contractors present during school hours
  - Visitors/Contractors present 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 "time outs", confiscation of phones etc.
- Students participating in Work Experience in the school
- Students from Teacher Training Colleges participating in School Placement in the 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 organisations during school day

## **Examples of Risks of Harm**

Having conducted a risk assessment, the Staff and Board of Management of St Fergus National School examined all aspects of the activities mentioned above and has established what it identifies as any practises or features which have the potential to put children at the risk of harm. Please note that this list is not exhaustive.

For the purpose of this document **"risk"** is defined as;

***"any potential for harm of a child while availing of the service" (Children First Act 2015). It should be noted that the risk of "harm" is taken to mean that defined in the Children's First Act, 2015 and not general health and safety risk. "***

Section 2 of the Act defines harm in relation to a child as follows:

- a) Assault, ill-treatment or neglect of the child in a manner that seriously affects or is likely to affect the child's health, development or welfare, or**
- b) Sexual abuse of a child**

Whether caused by a single act, omission or circumstances or a series or combination of acts, omissions or circumstances or otherwise;

***"ill-treatment" means, in relation to a child; "to abandon or cruelly treat the child, or to cause or procure or allow the child to be abandoned or cruelly treated"***

***"neglect" means, in relation to a child, to deprive the child of adequate food, warmth, clothing, hygiene, supervision, safety or medical care"***

***"welfare", includes, in relation to a child, the moral, intellectual, physical, emotional and social welfare of the child."***

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 at this time 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.

- Risk of harm of not being recognised by school personnel
- Risk of harm of not being reported properly and promptly by school personnel
- Risk of the 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 a volunteer or visitor to the school
- Risk of child being harmed by a member of the school personnel, a member of staff of another organisation, or other person while child participating in out of school activities e.g. school tour, swimming lessons
- Risk of harm due to inappropriate use of online remote teaching and learning communication platform such as, an uninvited accessing the lesson link, students being left unsupervised for long periods of time in breakout rooms
- Risk of harm due to bullying of child by another child or adult
- 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 relationships/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 in school or on school activities.
- 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 inappropriate implementation of code of behaviour
- Risk of harm in one-to-one/group teaching, assessment, or 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.

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**

As part of its implementation of the *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017*, St Fergus' National School must address the risks of harm identified above.

The procedures which will be used are as follows;

- 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 fully implements The Stay Safe Programme
- The school fully implements the SPHE Curriculum
- The school has an Anti-Bullying Policy and Anti-Cyber Bullying Policy which fully adhere to the requirements of the Department's *Anti Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools*. Our Anti-Bullying Policy is approved by St. Senan's Diocesan Office. It contains a step by step response to a report of bullying within the school, in the form of the Seán Fallon programme "Break Through the Cloud of Bullying"
- The school undertakes anti-racism awareness initiatives.
- The school has a policy in place in respect of School Tours and travelling by bus.
- The school has a Health and Safety Policy.
- The school adheres to the requirements of the Garda vetting legislation and relevant DES circulars in relation to recruitment and Garda vetting. We also adhere to the vetting requirements of St. Senan's Diocesan Office. All substitute teachers must provide a Statutory Declaration and Garda Vetting Documentation to the School Office BEFORE commencing work
- The school personnel adhere to the Teaching Council Guidance on Best Practise for Teachers
- The school complies with the agreed disciplinary procedures as laid down in the Code of Behaviour of St Fergus' NS
- The school has an Additional Support Policy

- The school has an Intimate Care Policy in respect of students who require such care.
- The school has an Administration of Medicines Policy
- The school-
  - has provided each staff member with a copy of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement
  - ensures that all new staff members are provided with a copy of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement
  - encourages all staff to avail of relevant training
  - encourages all Board of Management members to avail of relevant training
  - maintains records of all staff and board member training
- CPD in the area of Child Protection was conducted by the Principal under the direction of PDST (now OIDE) and on site for whole staff (based on the PDST Training for Principals) on 25<sup>th</sup> April 2018. New training for Staff will be organised by the Principal in the school year 2023/24
- The school has in place a policy and procedures for the administration of First Aid and Head Injuries
- The school has in place a Code of Behaviour for pupils which is strictly adhered to and reviewed annually.
- The school has an acceptable us policy in place and a remote teaching and learning policy. These have been communicated to parents.
- The school has in place a Policy on Mobile Phones and Electronic Equipment as per circular 0038/2018
- The school has in place a Critical Incident Management Policy
- The school has in place a policy and procedures for the use of external personnel to supplement the delivery of the curriculum or external coaches/guest speakers.
- All visitors must sign the Sign In/Sign Out Book.
- Drop off and collections outside of designated times must be conducted through the school office with pupils being signed in/signed out by the accompanying adult.
- Junior and Senior Infants are collected by parents from the Junior Yard.
- Security cameras are installed in the school yards and the approach path to school. A CCTV Policy is in place for the use of these cameras.
- The school has in place a policy and procedures in respect of students undertaking work experience or teacher training placement in the school
- Review of Child Protection Documents of St. Fergus NS has been undertaken in September 2023 as per direction from St. Senan's Diocesan Office.

Whole School Community is made aware of the completion of this review - on website and through direct contact in Aladdin or hard copy if requested.