



HOLY FAMILY JUNIOR NATIONAL SCHOOL

River Valley, Swords, Co Dublin.

Principal: Ms M McNally
Deputy Principal: Ms E Keely
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Child Safeguarding Statement

1. Policy Statement:

Holy Family Junior National School is a Catholic primary school providing primary education for boys and girls from Junior Infants to Second Class. The Board of Management of Holy Family J.N.S. is fully committed to safeguarding the well-being of its pupils. Every individual in our school (teacher/ancillary staff/ volunteer) should, at all times show respect and understanding for pupils' rights, safety and welfare and conduct themselves in a way that reflects the principles of our school.

Our first priority is the welfare of the young people entrusted to our care and we are committed to providing an environment which will allow our pupils to learn to the best of their ability, free from bullying and intimidation. The BOM wishes to provide the best possible environment for our pupils because young people deserve to be educated in a safe environment free of abuse of any kind. Our pupils have rights, which must be respected, and responsibilities that they must accept. They will be encouraged to realise that they have responsibilities to treat all pupils/teachers/ancillary staff/volunteers with courtesy and respect.

2. Values and Principles to Safeguard Children from Harm

Core Values in Holy Family JNS

The work in our school is based on the following principles that will guide the interactions which occur among all members of our school community. Our pupils' experience of school should be guided by what is best for them.

Integrity in relationships

Adults interacting with young people should do so with integrity and respect for the child. All adult actions in our school should be guided by what is best for the child and verbal, physical, emotional or sexual abuse of any kind are unacceptable.

Quality of atmosphere and ethos

The education of young people should be conducted in a safe, positive and encouraging atmosphere. A child-centred ethos will help to ensure that pupils are facilitated to develop at an appropriate pace.

Equality

All children should be treated in an equitable and fair manner regardless of age, ability, sex, religion, social and ethnic background or political persuasion.

Child Welfare and Protection Procedures

Child welfare and the protection of young people are the concern of all adults at all times, irrespective of their role within this school. In accordance with the requirements of 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, the Board of Management of Holy Family JNS has agreed the Child Safeguarding Statement set out in this document.

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. 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. 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;
- comply fully with its statutory obligations under the Children First Act 2015 and other relevant legislation relating to the protection and welfare of children;
- Co-operate fully 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 taking unnecessary risks that may leave themselves open to accusations of abuse or neglect
- 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.

3. Risk Assessment

Written Assessment of Risk of Holy Family JNS Swords.

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*, a Written Risk Assessment of Holy Family JNS., Swords has been carried out and will continue to be monitored and updated. **(Appendix 1)**

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.

4. Procedures

This Statement has been developed in line with requirements under the Children First Act 2015, the *Children First: National Guidance*, and Tusla's *Child Safeguarding: A Guide for Policy, Procedure and Practice*. In addition to the procedures listed in the risk assessment in Section 3, the following procedures support our intention to safeguard children while they are availing of our service:

Procedure for the Safe Recruitment and Selection of Workers and Volunteers to Work with Children

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 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
- Makes relevant training available to staff
- Encourages Board of Management members to avail of relevant training
- The Board of Management maintains records of all staff and Board members training

Procedure for appointing a relevant person

The Board of Management of Holy Family JNS has appointed the DLPs (named below) as the "Relevant Persons" (as defined in the Children First Act 2015) to be the first point of contact in respect of the child safeguarding statement.

Designated Liaison Persons:

- **Designated Person** in Holy Family JNS to whom incidents should be reported is: Ms Mary McNally, (Principal) Holy Family JNS, River Valley, Swords Co Dublin. Ph: (01) 8404394
- **Deputy Designated Person:** Ms Emma Keely (Deputy Principal), Holy Family JNS, River Valley, Swords Co Dublin. Ph: (01) 8404394

Please note that incidents should be reported in the first instance to the person who is fulfilling the role of principal on the day and in the second instance to the person who is fulfilling the role of deputy principal on the day.

Responsibilities of all School Personnel (Teaching and Non-Teaching)

School personnel are especially well placed to observe changes in children's behaviour, their lack of development or outward signs of abuse. In any situation where a member of school personnel (including a registered teacher), receives an allegation or has a suspicion that a child may have been abused or neglected, is being abused or neglected, or is at risk of abuse or neglect, he or she shall, without delay, report the matter to the DLP.

All registered teachers employed by the school are mandated persons under the Children First Act 2015. Where a registered teacher has any such concern, in addition to reporting it to the DLP, he or she must also consider whether the concern is at or above the threshold at which the teacher must make a mandated report to Tusla.

Guidelines for teachers / ancillary staff

See also: *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017*, Department of Education and Skills.

All/any concerns for the safety or welfare of a young person should be logged. Persons unsure about whether or not certain behaviours are harmful and therefore reportable, should speak to the Designated Liaison Person who will contact the duty social worker in Tusla where they will receive advice.

Criteria for mandated reporting: threshold of harm

- Under the Children First Act, 2015 registered teachers as mandated persons are required to report to Tusla any knowledge, belief or reasonable grounds to suspect that a child has been harmed, is being harmed, or is at risk of being harmed. The Act defines harm as assault, ill-treatment, neglect or sexual abuse, and covers single and multiple instances. The threshold of harm for each category of abuse at which registered teachers as mandated persons have a statutory obligation to report concerns is outlined below.

- **Neglect**

Neglect is “to deprive the child of adequate food, warmth, clothing, hygiene, supervision, safety or medical care”. The threshold of harm, at which a registered teacher as a mandated person has a statutory obligation to report to Tusla under the Children First Act, 2015 is reached when he or she knows, believes or has reasonable grounds to suspect that a child’s needs have been neglected, are being neglected, or are at risk of being neglected to the point where **the child’s health, development or welfare have been or are being seriously affected, or are likely to be seriously affected.**

- **Emotional abuse/ill-treatment**

Ill-treatment is “to abandon or cruelly treat the child, or to cause or procure or allow the child to be abandoned or cruelly treated”. Emotional abuse is covered in the definition of ill-treatment used in the Children First Act, 2015. The threshold of harm, at which a registered teacher as a mandated person has a statutory obligation to report to Tusla under the Children First Act, 2015 is reached when he or she knows, believes or has reasonable grounds to suspect that a child has been, is being or is at risk of being ill-treated to the point where **the child’s health, development or welfare have been or are being seriously affected, or are likely to be seriously affected.**

- **Physical Abuse**

The threshold of harm, at which a registered teacher as a mandated person has a statutory obligation to report to Tusla under the Children First Act, 2015 is reached when he or she knows, believes or has reasonable grounds to suspect that a child has been, is being or is at risk of being assaulted and that as a result **the child’s health, development or welfare have been or are being seriously affected, or are likely to be seriously affected.**

○ Sexual Abuse

A registered teacher as a mandated person who knows, believes or has reasonable grounds to suspect that a child has been, is being, or is at risk of being sexually abused has a statutory obligation to report this to Tusla under the Children First Act, 2015. Such reports shall be made in accordance with the reporting requirements outlined in Chapter 5 of the *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017*.

Sexual abuse to be reported under the Children First Act, 2015 [as amended by Section 55 of the Criminal Law (Sexual Offences) Act 2017] is defined as an offence against the child, as listed in Schedule 3 of the Children First Act, 2015.

A full list of relevant offences against the child which are considered sexual abuse is set out at Appendix 3 of the Children First National Guidance 2017 and in Appendix 2 to the *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017*.

Important note: As all sexual abuse falls within the category of seriously affecting a child's health welfare or development, all concerns about sexual abuse must be submitted as a mandated report to Tusla. There is one exception which deals with certain sexual activity between older teenagers which is outlined in the *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017*.

Reasonable grounds for a child protection or welfare concern include:

- Evidence (e.g. injury or behaviour) that is consistent with abuse and is unlikely to have been caused in any other way
- Any concern about possible sexual abuse
- Consistent signs that a child is suffering from emotional or physical neglect
- A child saying or indicating by other means that he or she has been abused
- Admission or indication by an adult or a child of an alleged abuse they committed
- An account from a person who saw the child being abused

A concern reported to the Designated Person may be made by a pupil / teacher / member of ancillary staff / parent who may in turn have to pass the concern to the local Statutory Authorities. It is not the responsibility of anyone working in Holy Family JNS to take responsibility or decide whether or not child abuse has taken place or is taking place. That is the job of the local statutory authorities. However, there is a responsibility to protect children by assisting the appropriate agencies so that they can then make enquiries and take any necessary action to protect the young person.

Everyone should follow both procedures outlined below, firstly the procedure for responding to a child in distress and secondly the procedure for reporting the concern.

Dealing with disclosures from children

Note: If a pupil indicates that they wish to make an allegation of abuse, it is recommended that the person to whom the allegation is being made be accompanied by one other person.

- An abused child is likely to be under severe emotional stress and a member of school personnel may be the only adult whom the child is prepared to trust. Great care shall be taken not to damage that trust.
- When information is offered in confidence, the member of school personnel will need tact and sensitivity in responding to the disclosure. The member of school personnel will need to reassure the child, and

endeavour to retain his or her trust, while explaining the need for action which will necessarily involve other adults being informed.

- It is important to tell the child that everything possible will be done to protect and support him or her, but not to make promises that cannot be kept e.g. promising not to tell anyone else.
- It is important to deal with any allegation of abuse or neglect in a sensitive and competent way through listening to and facilitating the child to tell about the problem, rather than interviewing the child about details of what happened. Disclosures of abuse must be dealt with sensitively and professionally.
- The following approach is suggested as best practice for dealing with these disclosures:
 - React calmly
 - Listen carefully and attentively
 - Take the child seriously
 - Reassure the child that they have taken the right action in talking to you
 - Do not promise to keep anything secret
 - Ask questions for clarification only. Do not ask leading questions. Open, non-specific questions should be used such as “Can you explain to me what you mean by that”
 - Check back with the child that what you have heard is correct and understood
- Do not:
 - express any opinions about the alleged abuser
 - give the child some indication of what would happen next, such as informing parents/guardians, health board or social services. It should be kept in mind that the child may have been threatened and may feel vulnerable at this stage.
 - check out the concerns with the parents/guardians before making a report unless doing so would endanger the child
- Make a written record of the conversation as soon as possible, in as much detail as possible
- Treat the information confidentially, subject to the requirements of the Children First National Guidance 2017 and relevant legislation
- Pass on this information to the Designated Person who will ensure that it is stored in a safe place away from the ordinary records which are kept on pupils

The duty of the recipient of such information is to follow the reporting requirements outlined in *Chapter 5 Child Protection Procedures for Primary & Post Primary Schools 2017*. **It must always be remembered that school personnel have a supportive, not an investigative role.**

Record Keeping

- When child abuse or neglect is suspected, it is essential to have a written record of all the information available. School personnel shall note carefully what they have observed and when they observed it. Signs of physical injury shall be described in detail and, if appropriate, sketched.
- Any comment by the child concerned, or by any other person, about how an injury occurred shall be recorded, preferably quoting words actually used, as soon as possible after the comment has been made. The record of the discussion shall be signed, dated and given to the DLP who shall retain it.
- The DLP shall record all concerns or allegations of child abuse brought to his or her attention, and the actions taken following receipt of a concern or allegation of child abuse.

- The DLP shall retain a copy of every report submitted by him or her to Tusla and shall keep a record of any further actions to be taken by the DLP and of any further communications with Tusla, An Garda Síochána or other parties in relation to that report.
- All records created shall be regarded as highly confidential and placed in a secure location.
- To allow for the effective recording and tracking of relevant records and actions, all child protection case files and any parties referenced in such files shall be assigned a unique code or serial number by the DLP. In this context “parties” means any party whose identity, if disclosed, might lead to the identification of a child or a person against whom an allegation has been made.
- All school personnel should be aware that section 17 of the Children First Act, 2015 makes it an offence for a person to disclose information to a third party which has been shared by Tusla during the course of an assessment arising from a mandated report, save in accordance with law, or unless Tusla has given that person written authorisation to do so. Failure to comply with this section of the Act is an offence liable to a fine or imprisonment for up to six months or both.

Reporting of Concerns

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 cases of **emergency**, where a child appears to be at immediate and serious risk and the Designated Person is unable to contact a duty social worker, the Gardaí should be contacted. Under no circumstances should a child be left in a dangerous situation pending intervention by the Statutory Authorities

A Designated Person reporting suspected or actual child abuse to the Statutory Authorities will first inform the family of their intention to make such a report, unless doing so would endanger the child or undermine an investigation

Action to be taken by all school personnel (teaching and non-teaching)

- If any member of school personnel, including a registered teacher, receives an allegation or has a suspicion that a child may have been abused or neglected, is being abused or neglected, or is at risk of abuse or neglect he or she shall, without delay, report the matter to the DLP in the school, who is responsible for ensuring that the reporting procedures are followed. In addition, registered teachers, as mandated persons, are required to follow the procedures at section 5.2 of the *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017*.
- The DLP shall make a written record of any concern brought to his or her attention by a member of school personnel and shall place this record in a secure location. All school personnel must have due regard to the need for confidentiality at all times.

- The supports of the school shall continue to be made available to the child(ren) concerned.
- Where the allegation or concern relates to the DLP, the member of school personnel shall, without delay, report the matter to the Chairperson of the Board of Management. In such cases, the Chairperson shall assume the role normally undertaken by the DLP and shall follow the reporting procedures. In addition, the relevant guidance and procedures regarding allegations of abuse made against school personnel shall also be followed.
- School personnel should also be aware of the reporting requirements of the Criminal Justice (Withholding of Information on Offences against Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act, 2012.

Action to be taken where a registered teacher has a concern

This section sets out the reporting procedures to be followed by both the DLP and registered teacher where a registered teacher has a concern that a child may have been, is being or is at risk of being abused or neglected.

- Where a registered teacher receives an allegation or has a suspicion that a child may have been abused or neglected, is being abused or neglected, or is at risk of abuse or neglect, he or she shall, without delay, report the matter to the DLP.
- Firstly, the DLP and the registered teacher must consider whether there are reasonable grounds for concern about the welfare and protection of the child.
- If the DLP and the registered teacher both agree that there are reasonable grounds for concern, they shall then jointly consider whether the concern in question is at or above the defined threshold of harm at which a report must be submitted as a mandated report to Tusla.
- If the DLP and the registered teacher both agree that the concern is at or above the defined threshold of harm at which a mandated report must be made, the concern shall, as soon as practicable, be submitted as a mandated report to Tusla jointly by the DLP and the registered teacher concerned using the Tusla report form. The Tusla report form which is available on the Tusla website, www.tusla.ie shall be completed as comprehensively as possible and indicate, in the manner required, that it is a mandated report under the Children First Act, 2015.
- Where the DLP is unsure whether to report a concern to Tusla or whether a report should be submitted as a mandated report, the DLP shall seek advice from Tusla. It should be noted that Children First National Guidance 2017 sets out that Tusla can provide advice in this regard. In consulting Tusla, the DLP shall follow the procedures set out at section 5.3.3 of the *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017*. The DLP shall inform the registered teacher concerned that such advice is being sought and shall, when received, inform the registered teacher of the advice provided.

- Where Tusla advises that a mandated report should be made, the DLP and the registered teacher concerned shall act on that advice and a mandated report shall, as soon as practicable, be submitted to Tusla jointly by the DLP and the registered teacher concerned.
- In any case (including where the DLP has sought and considered the advice of Tusla) where the DLP and the registered teacher are both satisfied that the concern is not at or above the defined threshold of harm for a mandated report but both consider that it constitutes reasonable grounds for concern, the DLP shall, as soon as practicable, report the concern to Tusla. In such cases (i.e. where the registered teacher is satisfied that the concern is not at or above the defined threshold of harm for a mandated report) the teacher is not required to submit a report to Tusla.
- In any case (including where the DLP has sought and considered the advice of Tusla) where either the DLP or the registered teacher has any remaining doubt as to whether the concern is at or above the defined threshold of harm for a mandated report, the DLP or the registered teacher (or both where applicable) shall submit the report to Tusla as a mandated report. Where applicable, the mandated report shall be submitted to Tusla jointly by the registered teacher and DLP.
- Where the DLP has decided not to report to Tusla or has decided not to submit the report as a mandated report to Tusla, the DLP shall advise the registered teacher that it still remains open to that teacher to seek advice from Tusla and to report his or her concern, or to report that concern as a mandated report to Tusla where he or she still considers that such a report is warranted.
- Where the DLP has decided not to report to Tusla the DLP shall give the registered teacher a clear statement in writing as to the reasons why action is not being taken and a copy of that statement shall be retained by the DLP. If, in such circumstances, the registered teacher decides to report the concern to Tusla or to report the concern as a mandated report to Tusla, he or she shall use the Tusla Report Form which is available on the Tusla website www.tusla.ie and shall also provide a copy of that report to the DLP. Where that report concerns a member of school personnel, the DLP shall inform the Board of Management (employer).

Important note for registered teachers:

Every registered teacher should note that as a mandated person the statutory obligation under the Children First Act 2015 to make a mandated report to Tusla rests with the individual teacher and this applies regardless of whether or not the DLP reports the concern in question. However a registered teacher who makes a mandated report to Tusla jointly with the DLP meets his or her statutory obligation to report to Tusla under the Children First Act 2015.

Under the Children First Act, 2015 mandated persons are required to make a written report as soon as practicable using the Tusla Report form. The mandated person should indicate, in the manner required on the form, that the report is a mandated report under the Children First Act, 2015.

Protection for Persons Reporting Child Abuse

The Protection for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act, 1998 provides immunity from civil liability to persons who report child abuse ‘reasonably and in good faith’ to the Health Board or the Gardai (See 5.13.1 – ISC. Code). The act also covers the offence of ‘false reporting’. The main provisions of the Act are:

- The provision of immunity from civil liability to any person who reports child abuse “reasonably and in good faith” to designated officers of Health Boards or any member of An Garda Síochána;
- The provision of significant protections for employees who report child abuse. These protections cover all employees and all forms of discrimination up to and including dismissal;
- The creation of a new offence of false reporting of child abuse where a person makes a report of child abuse to the appropriate authorities “knowing that statement to be false”. This is a new criminal offence designed to protect innocent persons from malicious reports.

Consequences of non-reporting

While the Children First Act, 2015 does not impose criminal sanctions on mandated persons who fail to make a report to Tusla, Children First National Guidance 2017 outlines that there are possible consequences for mandated persons who fail to report. In the case of registered teachers, there are a number of administrative actions that Tusla could take if, after an investigation, it emerges that a mandated report was not made by a registered teacher and a child was subsequently left at risk or harmed.

In that regard, Children First National Guidance 2017 provides that Tusla may:

- (a) make a complaint about the registered teacher under the Fitness to Teach provisions of the Teaching Council Acts 2001 to 2015.
- (b) pass information regarding the failure to make a report to the National Vetting Bureau of An Garda Síochána. This information could potentially be disclosed to current or future employers when the registered teacher is next Garda vetted.

Informing the Board of Management

At each board of management meeting, the principal’s report to the board shall include a Child Protection Oversight Report containing information under 4 headings as follows:

- (1) Allegations of abuse made against members of school personnel
- (2) Other child protection concerns in respect of pupils in the school (i.e. concerns that do not involve any allegation of abuse against a member of school personnel)
- (3) Child protection concerns arising from alleged bullying behaviour amongst pupils and
- (4) Summary data in respect of reporting.

Allegations against Teachers / Other Members of School Community

The Board of Management of Holy Family JNS has agreed procedures to be followed in cases of alleged child abuse against teachers / ancillary staff / volunteer helpers / visiting coaches. They are as follows:

- the reporting procedure in respect of the allegation/suspicion;

- the procedure for dealing with the employee (carried out by the Chairperson of the BOM)

The safety of the child making the allegation and the safety of any other children who may be at risk will be the main considerations at all times. The school will take any necessary steps that may be necessary to protect children in its care. The issue of confidentiality is important. Information is on a need to know basis and the person against whom the allegation is made should be treated with respect and fairness.

Person against whom an allegation is made

While the Designated Person makes the report to Tusla, the Chairperson of the BOM should deal with the person in question.

- The Chairperson should privately inform the person that (a) an allegation has been made against him / her and (b) the nature of the allegation. He / she should be afforded an opportunity to respond, and to be accompanied by another adult.
- The teacher / person against whom the allegation is made should be asked to step aside pending the outcome of the investigation. When a person is asked to step aside it should be made clear that it is only a precautionary measure and will not prejudice any later disciplinary proceedings.

The Board of Management should be informed by the Designated Person that a staff member has been asked to stand aside. The Board of Management can consider taking disciplinary action against the person but should ensure that this does not interfere with the investigation of the Statutory Authorities. The BOM will give due consideration to the outcome of the investigation and any implications which it might have.

Confidentiality

Confidentiality should be maintained in respect of all issues and people involved in cases of abuse, welfare or bad practice. It is important that the rights of both the child and the person about whom the complaint has been made are protected.

The following points should be kept in mind:

- A guarantee of confidentiality or undertakings regarding secrecy cannot be given, as the welfare of the child will supersede all other considerations
- All information should be treated in a careful and sensitive manner and should be discussed only with those who need to know
- Information should be conveyed in a sensitive manner to the parents / guardians of the child about whom there are concerns
- Giving information to others on a 'need to know' basis for the protection of a child is not a breach of confidentiality
- All persons involved in a child protection process (the child, his/her parents/guardians, the alleged offender, his/her family) should be afforded appropriate respect, fairness, support and confidentiality at all stages of the procedure.
- Information should be stored in a secure place, with limited access to designated people.
- The requirements of the Data Protection laws should be adhered to.

- Breach of confidentiality is a serious manner.

Anonymous Complaints

Anonymous complaints can be difficult to deal with but should not be ignored. In all cases the safety and welfare of the child/children is paramount. Any such complaints relating to inappropriate behaviour should be brought to the attention of the Designated Person. The information should be checked out and handled in a confidential manner.

Rumours

Rumours should **not** be allowed to hang in the air. Any rumours relating to inappropriate behaviour should be brought to the attention of the Designated Person and checked out without delay.

Child Protection Conference: attendance by a member of school personnel

Any request for a member of school personnel to attend a child protection conference should be made to the DLP.


5. Implementation

The Board of Management Holy Family JNS recognises 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 from harm while availing of our service.

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 policy will be reviewed annually

Signed: _____



Ms Angela O'Toole, (Chairperson)
Board of Management, Holy Family J.N.S.

Dated: _____

17/06/21

The guidelines in this document are based on the following documents:

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,
Tusla Guidance on the preparation of Child Safeguarding Statements.

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.

APPENDIX 1

Risk Assessment

List of School Activities	Risk Level	The School has identified the following Risk of Harm	The School has the following Procedures in place to address risk identified in this assessment
Access to School	High	Harm from unknown adults and pupils	During school hours access to school is via main gate and front door. Fob system on external doors. Camera on main door. CCTV
Training of school personnel in Child Protection matters	High	Harm not recognised or reported promptly	Child Safeguarding Statement & DES procedures made available to all staff DLP& DDLP to attend PDST face to face training All Staff to view Tusla training module & any other online training offered by PDST BOM records all records of staff and board training
One to one teaching	High	Harm by school personnel In-appropriate	School has policy in place for one to one teaching: Open doors Table between teacher and pupil
Care of Children with special needs attending Sensory Room	High	Harm by school personnel	Planned visits only recommended with doors left open Special Needs Assistant Policy
Toilet areas	High	Inappropriate behaviour by pupils	Usage and supervision policy
Toileting	High	Harm by school personnel	Special Needs Assistant Policy Procedure to be included in PPP and agreed by parents and school personnel Always have "double cover" direction and prompting student only with no physical contact. Classroom toilet when possible. Where disabled toilet used 2 adults present at all times. Parent to be notified in event of soiling(to collect or change student on site)
Curricular Provision in respect of SPHE, RSE, Stay safe.	Med	Non-teaching of these curricular areas	School implements SPHE, RSE, Stay Safe, Walk Tall in full
Daily arrival and dismissal of pupils	Med	Harm from older pupils, unknown adults on the playground	Arrival and dismissal supervised by Teachers <i>Parents and guardians informed that children should not arrive in school grounds before 8.50 a.m.</i> <i>Wet mornings – teacher supervise</i> Children not collected within 10 minutes of dismissal time, phonecall made to guardians and child waits in foyer under supervision.
Arrival/Collection of Pupils during school day	Med	School personnel unaware that child left premises	Parent Information Booklet Sign out/In book in foyer to be completed by parent/guardian. Release of child to nominated adult only.
Parent / Teacher meetings	High	Child left unsupervised while parent meets	Parents informed that children should be supervised by a responsible adult and not left

		teacher	alone at any time.
Managing of challenging behaviour amongst pupils, including appropriate use of restraint	High	Injury to pupils and staff	Health & Safety Policy Code of Behaviour Special Needs Assistant Policy
Sports Coaches & Use of external personnel to supplement curriculum	Med	Harm by adults	Policy & Procedures in place Facilitators from outside school always work with teachers present. Vetting for sports coaches to be insisted on. Evidence of vetting to be produced
Students/Volunteers/TY Students participating in work experience	Med	Harm by student	Child Safeguarding Statement. Garda Vetting Class teacher always present
Recreation breaks for pupils	High	Harm by other students, adults in grounds, harm due to inadequate supervision of children in school	Supervision Policy and Roster in place to ensure teachers and SNAs always supervising School gates closed during school hours
DVDs /web content shown to pupils as a teaching resource	High	Exposure to inappropriate material	DVDs must have a 'U' rating or a PEGI rating appropriate to their age. All material to be shown must be viewed in advance by class teacher
Classroom teaching	Low	Harm by school personnel	Child Safeguarding Statement. Garda Vetting Red card System Pupils on messages around school in pairs
Outdoor teaching activities	Med	Harm by school personnel,	Child Safeguarding Statement. Garda Vetting In clear view of other staff / additional staff with group
School outings (Cinema & School Tours)	High	Harm from unknown adults, other children, harm due to inadequate supervision Road Safety	Indemnity Form completed by bus company Adequate seatbelts and insurance School Tour Policy Supervision policy/Code of Behaviour Additional adults to accompany class on outings. Ratio depends on the age of the pupils and also on the activity involved.
Annual Sports Day	Med	Harm by school personnel,	Child Safeguarding Statement. Garda Vetting Children returning to school building to be accompanied by an adult
Fundraising events involving pupils (Sponsored Jog, Bookfair, Spring Day)	Med	Harm from unknown adults, other children	Supervision Policy Child Safeguarding Statement
Administration of First Aid	High	Harm by school personnel	Trained First Aiders (list displayed around school) Defibrillator in Hall – Demo to all staff Nov 2017 Defibrillator regularly checked by JNS First Aid Kits/Bags on corridors, yard and school tour. Accident Report Book Telephone call to parents when head injury recorded.

Administration of Medicine	High	Medicine administered incorrectly / not administered when required	Administration of Medicines policy Epipen/Anapen demonstration to staff termly Children with Serious medical conditions listed and all staff made aware. Photo of child with instructions in the event of serious medical emergency displayed in staffroom. Class teacher also has copy.
Bullying	High	Not detected / addressed / resolved	Code of Behaviour Anti-bullying Policy SPHE programme taught
Care of pupils with specific vulnerabilities/ needs such as <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 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 the Child Protection Notification System (CPNS) 	High	harm not being reported properly and promptly by school personnel, harm due to inadequate supervision, harm not being recognised by school personnel Flight risk on arrival/dismissal/yard	Code of Behaviour Anti-bullying Policy SPHE programme taught Supervision Policy Child Safeguarding Statement High Vis jacket where agreed with Parent/guardian in yard. Information re vulnerable child made available to all staff
Use of school premises by other organisation during school day	High	harm by volunteer or visitor to the school	Supervision Policy Under guidance of teacher
Use of school premises by other organisation after school day	High	harm by volunteer or visitor to the school	All users complete BOM Hall Users Agreement Public Liability Insurance Child Protection Policy Confirmation regarding Garda Vetting
Pupils permitted to bring mobile phones to school	High	harm due to children inappropriately accessing/using phones	Children encouraged not to have mobiles in school, but if they do must be switched off and left in school bags.
Contacting Parents by phone/e-mail	High	Safeguarding personal information	Where parents are to be contacted by phone or e-mail staff should use school phones or e-mail accounts
Use of Information and Communication Technology by pupils in school	Med	harm due to children inappropriately accessing/using computers, social media, phones and other devices while at school	ICT policy Anti-Bullying Policy Code of Behaviour
Use of Information and Communication Technology by staff in school	High	harm caused by member of staff communicating with pupils in appropriate manner via social media, texting, digital device or other manner,	Staff not permitted to communicate with children via social media, texting, digital device or other manner. Staff not permitted to access inappropriate material via social media, texting, digital device or other manner during school hours. Staff are not permitted to record / photograph

		or accessing/circulating inappropriate material via social media, texting, digital device or other manner	pupils using their own personal devices. Only school cameras are to be used for photographing/recording pupils.
Use of video/photography/other media to record school events by school personnel	Low	harm due to children inappropriately accessing/using computers, social media, phones and other devices while at school	Child Safeguarding Statement Consent sought from Parents / Guardians Names not put with pictures
School Photographer	Low	harm by visitor to school	No unsupervised access to pupils Parents informed of dates when photographer coming
Use of video/photography/other media to record school events by parents/guardians	High	harm due to children: inappropriately accessing/using computers, social media, phones and other devices while at school	Child Safeguarding Statement While the school does not encourage this practice, we recognize that we cannot control it and parents are informed that any photographs/videos are for family use only and not to be circulated via social media.
Application of sanctions under the school's Code of Behaviour/Discipline including detention of pupils,	Med	harm by a member of school personnel or another child	Child Safeguarding Statement Supervision Policy Code of Behaviour Discipline Policy
Student teachers undertaking training placement in school	Med	Harm by student teacher	Child Safeguarding Statement Garda Vetting Familiar with School Policies Under Guidance of Class Teacher/Principal

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 2017*

APPENDIX 2

Checklist for Review of the Child Safeguarding Statement

The *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017* require the Board of Management must undertake a review of its Child Safeguarding Statement and that the following checklist shall be used for this purpose. The review must be completed every year or as soon as practicable after there has been a material change in any matter to which the Child Safeguarding Statement refers. Undertaking an annual review will also ensure that a school also meets its statutory obligation under section 11(8) of the Children First Act 2015, to review its Child Safeguarding Statement every two years.

The checklist is designed as an aid to conducting this review and is not intended as an exhaustive list of the issues to be considered. Individual Boards of Management shall include other items in the checklist that are of relevance to the school in question.

As part of the overall review process, Boards of Management should also assess relevant school policies, procedures, practices and activities vis a vis their adherence to the principles of best practice in child protection and welfare as set out in the school's Child Safeguarding Statement, the Children First Act 2015 and the *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017*.

	Yes/No
1. Has the Board formally adopted a Child Safeguarding Statement in accordance with the 'Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools 2017'?	
2. As part of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement, has the Board formally adopted, without modification, the 'Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools 2017'?	
3. Does the school's Child Safeguarding Statement include a written assessment of risk as required under the Children First Act 2015?	
4. Has the Board reviewed and updated where necessary the written assessment of risk as part of this overall review?	
5. Has the DLP attended available child protection training?	
6. Has the Deputy DLP attended available child protection training?	
7. Have any members of the Board attended child protection training?	
8. Are there both a DLP and a Deputy DLP currently appointed?	
9. Are the relevant contact details (Tusla and An Garda Síochána) to hand?	
10. Has the Board arrangements in place to communicate the school's Child Safeguarding Statement to new school personnel?	
11. Is the Board satisfied that all school personnel have been made aware of their responsibilities under the 'Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools 2017' and the Children First Act 2015?	
12. Has the Board received a Principal's Child Protection Oversight Report at each Board meeting held since the last review was undertaken?	
13. Since the Board's last review, was the Board informed of any child protection reports made to Tusla/An Garda Síochána by the DLP?	
14. Since the Board's last review, was the Board informed of any cases where the DLP sought advice from Tusla/and as a result of this advice, no report to the HSE was made?	
15. Since the Board's last review, was the Board informed of any cases where an allegation of abuse or neglect was made against any member of school personnel?	
16. Has the Board been provided with and reviewed all documents relevant to the Principal's Child Protection Oversight Report?	
17. Is the Board satisfied that the child protection procedures in relation to the making of reports to Tusla/An Garda Síochána were appropriately followed in each case reviewed?	

	Yes/No
18. Is the Board satisfied that, since the last review, all appropriate actions are being or have been taken in respect of any member of school personnel against whom an allegation of abuse or neglect has been made?*	
19. Were child protection matters reported to the Board appropriately recorded in the Board minutes?	
20. Is the Board satisfied that all records relating to child protection are appropriately filed and stored securely?	
21. Has the Board been notified by any parent in relation to that parent not receiving the standard notification required under section 5.6 of the 'Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools 2017'?	
22. In relation to any cases identified at question 21 above, has the Board ensured that any notifications required section 5.6 of the 'Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools 2017' were subsequently issued by the DLP?	
23. Has the Board ensured that the Parents' Association (if any), has been provided with the school's Child Safeguarding Statement?	
24. Has the Board ensured that the patron has been provided with the school's Child Safeguarding Statement?	
25. Has the Board ensured that the school's Child Safeguarding Statement is available to parents on request?	
26. Has the Board ensured that the Stay Safe Programme & SPHE curriculum is implemented in full in the school?	
27. Is the Board satisfied that the statutory requirements for Garda Vetting have been met in respect of all school personnel (employees and volunteers)? *	
28. Is the Board satisfied that the Department's requirements in relation to the provision of a child protection related statutory declaration and associated form of undertaking have been met in respect of persons appointed to teaching and non-teaching positions?*	
29. Is the Board satisfied that, from a child protection perspective, thorough recruitment and selection procedures are applied by the school in relation to all school personnel (employees and volunteers)?*	
30. Has the Board considered and addressed any complaints or suggestions for improvements regarding the school's Child Safeguarding Statement?	
31. Has the Board sought the feedback of parents in relation to the school's compliance with the requirements of the child safeguarding requirements of the 'Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools 2017'?	
32. Has the Board sought the feedback of pupils in relation to the school's child safeguarding arrangements?	
33. Is the Board satisfied that the 'Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools 2017' are being fully and adequately implemented by the school?	
34. Has the Board identified any aspects of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement and/or its implementation that require further improvement?	
35. Has the Board put in place an action plan containing appropriate timelines to address those aspects of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement and/or its implementation that have been identified as requiring further improvement ?	
36. Has the Board ensured that any areas for improvement that that were identified in any previous review of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement have been adequately addressed?	

Annual Review Completed: _____

Chairperson Board of Management