



St. Mark's Boys National School

Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment

Child Safeguarding Statement

St. Mark's Boys National School is a primary school providing primary education to pupils from Junior Infants to Sixth Class.

In accordance with the requirements of the Children First Act 2015, Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017, the Addendum to Children First (2019), the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools 2017 and Tusla Guidance on the preparation of Child Safeguarding Statements, the Board of Management of St. Mark's Boys 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 **Johanna Carroll**.
- 3 The Acting Deputy Designated Liaison Person (Deputy DLP) is **Deirdre Meade**.
- 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.

- 6 This statement has been published on the school's website and has been provided to all members of school personnel, 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 01/02/2022.

This Child Safeguarding Statement was reviewed by the Board of Management on 01/02/2022.

Signed: Anne Doherty

Chairperson of Board of Management

Date: 6.12.2023

Signed: Johanna Carroll

Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management

Date: 06/12/2023

Child Safeguarding Risk Assessment

Written Assessment of Risk of St. Mark's Boys National 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 2017*, the following is the Written Risk Assessment of St. Mark's Boys National School.

1. List of school activities

Daily arrival and dismissal of pupils
Recreation breaks for pupils
Classroom teaching
One-to-one teaching
Outdoor teaching activities
Online teaching and learning remotely
Sporting Activities
School outings
Use of toilet areas in schools
Annual Sports Day
Fundraising events involving pupils
Use of off-site facilities for school activities: Resource Centre, Mayfield Swimming Pool, Church etc.
School transport arrangements including use of taxi escorts
Care of children with special educational needs, including intimate care where needed
Management of challenging behaviour amongst pupils

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

Risk of harm not being recognised by school personnel

Risk of harm not being reported properly and promptly by school personnel

Risk of child being harmed in the school by 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 volunteer or visitor to the school or other parents

Risk of child being harmed by a member of school personnel, a member of staff of another organisation or other person while child participating in out of school activities e.g. school trip, swimming lessons, resource centre etc.

Risk of harm due to inappropriate use of online remote teaching and learning communication platform such as an uninvited person accessing the lesson link

Risk of harm due to bullying of child

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 relationship/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 at school

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 inadequate code of behaviour

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

Risk of harm caused by member of school personnel communicating with pupils in appropriate 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

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

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.

- The school has in place a policy and procedures for the administration of First Aid.
- The school has in place a code of behaviour for pupils.
- The school has an Acceptable Use Policy in place, reviewed in January 2022 to include provision for online teaching and learning remotely, and communicates this policy to parents via our school website.
- The school has in place a policy governing the use of smart phones and tablet devices in the school by pupils as per circular 38/2018 and in respect of usage of mobile phones by staff.
- The school has in place a Critical Incident Management Plan.
- The school has in place a Home School Liaison policy and related procedures.
- The school has in place a policy and procedures for external persons in respect of;
 - supplementing the delivery of the curriculum
 - external sports coaches
 - external organisations such as SCP/ Fóróige who work one-to-one or in small groups with the pupils
 - student teacher placements and
 - students undertaking work experience in the school.

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*

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.

It is acknowledged that schools already have in place a range of policies, practices and procedures to mitigate the risk of harm to children while they are participating in the activities of the school and that some school activities will carry low or minimal risks of harm compared to others. In the context of the risk assessment that must be undertaken by schools, the Children First Act, 2015 refers to risk as “any potential for harm”. Therefore, it is important that, as part of its risk assessment process, each school lists and reviews all of its various activities (which shall include identifying those that may carry low risk of harm as well as those that carry higher risks of harm). Doing so will help the school to (1) identify, as required under the Children First Act, 2015, any risks of harm that may exist in respect of the school’s activities, (2) identify and assess the adequacy of the various procedures already in place to manage those risks of harm and (3) identify and put in place any such additional procedures as are considered necessary to manage any risk identified.