Mandatory Template 1: Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment Template

Child Safeguarding Statement

St Fintan's NS 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 (revised 2023) and Tusla Guidance on the preparation of Child Safeguarding Statements, the Board of Management of St Fintan's NS 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   Cora Farrell

3. The Deputy Designated Liaison Person (Deputy DLP) is   Linda Maher

4. The Relevant Person is   Cora Farrell
   (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 [gov.ie](gov.ie) 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](National Vetting Bureau) 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 [gov.ie](gov.ie) 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.

- 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.

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- The various procedures referred to in this Statement can be accessed via the school's website, the 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 ___25/9/23___ [date].

This Child Safeguarding Statement was reviewed by the Board of Management on ___Sept '24___ [most recent review date].

Signed: _____   Signed: _____

Chairperson of Board of Management   Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management

Date: ___25/9/23___   Date: ___25/9/23,___

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Child Safeguarding Risk Assessment

Written Assessment of Risk of [name of 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 (revised 2023)*, the following is the Written Risk Assessment of [name of school]].

1. List of school activities	2. The school has identified the following risk of harm in respect of its activities –	3. The school has the following procedures in place to address the risks of harm identified in this assessment -
(insert list of school activities in this section) **Section A: Information and Training** 1. Garda Vetting 2. Training of school personnel in Child Protection matters 3. Curricular provision in respect of SPHE, RSE, Stay Safe	(insert risks of harm identified in this section) **Section A: Information and training** 1. Outdated Garda Vetting 2. Harm not recognised or reported promptly 3. Not teaching of same	(insert the procedures in place to address risks of harm in this section) **Section A: Information and Training** 1. All staff will provide evidence of Garda Vetting 2. The *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2023* are made available to all school personnel and discussed Child Safeguarding Statement and DES procedures made available to all staff DLP and DDLP to attend child protection training and all staff to view TUSLA training module and any other online training offered by PDST. New staff directed to relevant training. Board of Management records all training of Board of Management members and staff

Section B: Teaching and School Premises

1. Daily arrival and dismissal of pupils
2. Recreation breaks for pupils
3. Classroom teaching
4. One-to-one / small group teaching
5. Outdoor teaching activities
6. Use of toilet / areas in schools
7. Sporting Activities
8. Peer to peer learning
9. School transport arrangements
10. Use of external personnel to supplement curriculum
11. Administration of First Aid
12. School outings / tours / trips
13. Home-time handover

Section B: Teaching and School Premises

1. Harm not being recognised by school personnel

   Harm from other pupils, unknown adults on the playground

   Inappropriate behaviour

   Gates, access

2. Harm in the school by another child/bullying

   Harm not being reported properly and promptly by school personnel

3. Harm in the school by a member of school personnel

   Teachers leaving room/supervision

   Children split due to teacher absence

Section B: Teaching and School Premises

1. The school has a yard/playground supervision policy to ensure appropriate supervision of children on arrival and dismissal

   Health and Safety Policy

   Gates, access to grounds to be managed and the Board of Management have installed additional yard railings and gates for pupil protection.

2. The school has pre-school, home-time, break-time and yard/playground supervision procedures in place to ensure appropriate supervision of children when onsite from 8.40am up to home time and during breaks

3. School implements Social Personal and Health Education curriculum (SPHE) including Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) component and Stay Safe programme in full.

   Management supports and encourages staff to avail of relevant training

   Induction and training provided to substitute and teachers/SNA's Encourages board of management members to avail of relevant training

14. Use of external personnel to support sports and other extra or co-curricular activities	4. Harm in one-to-one / small group teaching scenarios	Code of Behaviour is followed and implemented in the school at all times.
15. After school use of school premises by teachers / staff / other organisations and teachers	5. Harm in the school by a member of school personnel	3. Child Safeguarding Statement and Department of Education and Skills procedures in operation and made available to all staff
	6. Inappropriate behaviour Risk of adults using children's toilets in school hall and in public areas	Appropriate backup supervision to be arranged in such circumstances
	7. Harm in the school by volunteer or visitor to the school Accident/Injury to a pupil	School Personnel are required to adhere to the *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2023* and all registered teaching staff are required to adhere to the *Children First Act 2015*
	8. Harm to pupils if they are unsupervised / loitering	Sharing of supervision systems in place for breaks etc.
	9. Harm to pupils	Adherence to school procedures
	10. Harm not recognised or promptly reported Inappropriate behaviour	Records of class split provided to Principal / Deputy Principal
	11. Harm in the school by volunteer or visitor to the school	4. In such circumstances, open doors, have table between teacher and pupil, glass panels in doors to allow clear view in / out. The school has in place a policy and procedures for one-to-one / small group teaching
	12. Harm 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, matches, choir events, orienteering / adventure centres	5. First Aid Policy Adequate supervision Child Safeguarding Statement and DES procedures made available to all staff Hazards Identified Boundaries well communicated
	13. Children coming to harm due to a lack of supervision, by being collected by a person unknown to them or children not being collected on time / at all.	

14. Harm due to inadequate supervision of children in school
15. Harm due to inadequate supervision of children in school
    Harm not recognised or promptly reported

The school has in place a Critical Incident Management Plan

6. The school has supervision procedures in place to ensure appropriate supervision of children in respect of specific areas (eg. outside of toilets / for playground)
   Clear signage in place stating that toilets are not for public use

7. Vetting procedures in place
   Child Protection Policy and procedures in place

8. Procedures are in place for staff supervision and school provides clear communication of roles to children involved in peer to peer learning at all times

9. Anti-Bullying policy
   Code of behaviour
   If school is not organising bus transport, parental organisation of lifts procedure applies, including use of parental responsibility letter.

10. Vetting procedures apply
    Teacher always present with external personnel
    Adequate supervision
    There are procedures in place when external persons supplement delivery of the curriculum
    Visitors sign daily visitors' register book

11. First Aid Policy

Policy and procedures for the administration of medication to pupils

12. Vetting by off-site companies checked as necessary

The school has in place clear procedures in respect of school outings

Adequate supervision including gender balance of staff where possible if considered relevant

13. Agreed procedures in place for home-time handover for all classes, including: teachers escort class groups to yard at home time, supervised sibling waiting zone (as necessary), pupils brought to reception if not collected and phone calls made by secretary

14. Vetting Procedures
Teachers in attendance
Procedures for the use of external coaches facilitators

Sign-in, sign-out visitors register

15. Vetting Procedures apply as necessary
Child Safeguarding Statement and DES procedures made available to all staff / facilitators
Insurance in place
Adequate supervision in place
School building and entry points secure

Section C: Special Educational Needs

1. Staff working to meet the care needs of children with special educational needs

Section D: Behaviour Management

1. Management of challenging behaviour amongst pupils
2. Prevention and dealing with bullying amongst pupils

Section E: Information and Communications Technology

1. Use of digital information and communication technology (ICT) by pupils in school + Use of video/photography

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Section C: Special Educational Needs

1. Harm to child while a child is receiving intimate care

Section D: Behaviour Management

1. Injury to pupils and staff
2. Harm in the school by another child

Section E: Information and Communications Technology

1. Harm due to children inappropriately accessing/using computers, social media, phones and other devices while at school Harm caused by member of school personnel communicating with pupils in inappropriate manner via social media, texting, digital device or other manner Harm from unknown adults Cyber bullying

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Section C: Special Educational Needs

1. Policy on Intimate Care in operation

Section D: Behaviour Management

1. Policy on Challenging behaviour Special Educational Needs Policy and related provisions
2. Supervision systems in place Anti-Bullying-Policy Stay Safe programme taught Code of Behaviour in operation

Section E: Information and Communications Technology

1. Digital Technology Acceptable Use Policy in operation for pupils / staff with provisions for all school related use of ICT. This is signed by parents on behalf of their child as appropriate. Parents / guardians of new-entrant pupils sign this also as required. Anti-Bullying Policy Code of Behaviour Mobile phone policy in respect of usage of mobile phones by pupils is in place

Section F: Recruitment and Other Personnel

1. Recruitment of school personnel including:
   Teachers/SNA's
   Caretaker/Secretary/Cleaners
   Co-curricular / extra-curricular / after school activity providers
2. External facilitators / guests / volunteer parents / guardians helping / working in the school
3. Transition year / other school-aged students participating in work experience in the school

Section F: Recruitment and Other Personnel

1. Lack of Garda vetting
   Harm not recognised or reported properly or promptly
   Harm due to inappropriate relationship/communications between child and another child or adult
2. Harm to pupil/s
3. Harm by student
4. Harm by student teacher

Section F: Recruitment and Other Personnel

1. The school adheres to the requirements DES / Tusla including in relation to recruitment and Garda vetting
   Child Safeguarding Statement and DES procedures made available to all staff. Management ensures all new staff are provided with a copy of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement
2. Garda vetting procedures followed as necessary
   Teachers in attendance as necessary
   Voluntary Workers Policy in operation

Online safety workshops provided for specific class groups at least annually
Annual school-wide internet safety themed work and regular discussion of online safety by teachers as appropriate
Visits from local Gardaí to provide talks / training as appropriate
Stay Safe programme taught
Staff supervise use of ICTs by pupils in school
Internet access for pupils within the school is solely restricted to that which is provided by the Department of Education's broadband for schools programme.

4. Student teachers undertaking teacher training placement in school.	Contract / work requirements agreed in advance
	3. Work experience policy Child Safeguarding Statement provided Garda vetting as necessary
	4. Procedures are in place in respect of student teacher placements Students work under supervision of an allocated teacher Child Safeguarding Statement provided Garda vetting as necessary

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.

Examples of activities, risks and procedures

The examples listed in this document are provided to assist schools in undertaking their risk assessment under the Children First Act, 2015. Schools should note that this list of examples is not intended to be exhaustive. It is the responsibility of each school to ensure, as far as possible, that any other risks and procedures that are relevant to its own particular circumstances are identified and specified in the written risk assessment and that adequate procedures are in place to address all risks identified.

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.

The Addendum to Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children published in January 2019 clarifies that organisations providing relevant services to children should consider the specific issue of online safety when carrying out their risk assessment and preparing their Child Safeguarding Statement.

The Guidance on Continuity of Schooling for primary and post-primary schools (April 2020) advises of the importance of teachers maintaining the safe and ethical use of the internet during distance learning and assisting parents and guardians to be aware of their role also. Schools should ensure that their Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) informs and guides remote or distance learning activity.

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)*.

Examples of School Activities

- Daily arrival and dismissal of pupils
- Recreation breaks for pupils
- Classroom teaching
- One-to-one teaching
- One-to one learning support
- One-to-one counselling
- Outdoor teaching activities
- Online teaching and learning remotely
- Sporting activities
- School outings

- School trips involving overnight stay
- School trips involving foreign travel
- Use of toilet/changing/shower areas in schools
- Provision of residential facilities for boarders
- Annual Sports Day
- Fundraising events involving pupils
- Use of off-site facilities for school activities
- School transport arrangements including use of bus escorts
- Care of children with special educational needs, including intimate care where needed
- Care of any vulnerable adult students, including intimate care where needed,
- Management of challenging behaviour amongst pupils, including appropriate use of restraint where required
- Management of provision of food and drink
- Administration of Medicine
- Administration of First Aid
- Curricular provision in respect of SPHE, RSE, Stay Safe
- Prevention and dealing with bullying amongst pupils
- Training of school personnel in child protection matters
- Use of external personnel to supplement 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/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
- Recruitment of school personnel including -

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- Teachers/SNAs
- Caretaker/Secretary/Cleaners
- Sports coaches
- External Tutors/Guest Speakers
- Volunteers/Parents in school activities
- Visitors/contractors present in school activities
- Visitors/contractors present during 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 detention of pupils, confiscation of phones etc.
- Students participating in work experience in the school
- Students from the school participating in work experience elsewhere
- Student teachers undertaking training placement in 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 organisation during school day
- Breakfast club
- Homework club/evening study

Examples of Risks of Harm

- 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
- 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
- Risk of harm due to inappropriate use of online remote teaching and learning communication platform such as an uninvited person accessing the lesson link, students being left unsupervised for long periods of time in breakout rooms

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- 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, counselling, 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

Examples of Procedures to address risks of harm

- 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 (revised 2023)* are made available to all school personnel
- School Personnel are required to adhere to the *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools (revised 2023)* and all registered teaching staff are required to adhere to the *Children First Act 2015* and its Addendum (2019)
- The school implements in full the Stay Safe Programme
- The school implements in full the SPHE curriculum
- The school implements in full the Wellbeing Programme at Junior Cycle
- The school has an Anti-Bullying Policy which fully adheres to the requirements of the Department's *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*

- The school undertakes anti-racism awareness initiatives
- The school has a yard/playground supervision policy to ensure appropriate supervision of children during, assembly, dismissal and breaks and in respect of specific areas such as toilets, changing rooms etc.
- The school has in place a policy and clear procedures in respect of school outings
- The school has a health and safety policy
- The school adheres to the requirements of the Garda vetting legislation and relevant DE circulars in relation to recruitment and Garda vetting
- The school has a codes of conduct for school personnel (teaching and non-teaching staff)
- The school complies with the agreed disciplinary procedures for teaching staff
- The school has a Special Educational Needs policy
- The school has an intimate care policy/plan in respect of students who require such care
- The school has in place a policy and procedures for the administration of medication to pupils
- The school –
  - o Has provided each member of school staff with a copy of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement
  - o Ensures all new staff are provided with a copy of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement
  - o Encourages staff to avail of relevant training
  - o Encourages board of management members to avail of relevant training
  - o Maintains records of all staff and board member training
- 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, to include provision for online teaching and learning remotely, and has communicated this policy to parents
- The school has in place a policy governing the use of smart phones and tables devices in the school by pupils as per circular 38/2018
- 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 the use of external persons to supplement delivery of the curriculum
- The school has in place a policy and procedures for the use of external sports coaches
- The school has in place a policy and clear procedures for one-to-one teaching activities
- The school has in place a policy and procedures for one-to-one counselling

- The school has in place a policy and procedures in respect of student teacher placements
- The school has in place a policy and procedures in respect of students undertaking work experience in the school
- The school has in place a policy and procedures in respect of pupils of the school undertaking work experience in external organisations