

Mandatory Template 1: St Mac Dara's Community College



Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment Template

Child Safeguarding Statement 2024

St. Mac Dara's Community College is a post-primary school providing /post-primary education to pupils from First Year to Leaving Certificate Year.

In accordance with the requirements of the [Children First Act 2015](#), [Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017](#), the [Addendum to Children First \(2019\)](#), the [Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools 2017](#) and [Tusla Guidance on the preparation of Child Safeguarding Statements](#), the Board of Management of **St. Mac Dara's Community College** 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: **Ms. Frances Gibson**
- 3 The Deputy Designated Liaison Person (Deputy DLP) is: **Ms Jenna Clune**
- 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.

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.

6 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.

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 **19th March 2024**.

This Child Safeguarding Statement was reviewed by the Board of Management on **26th February 2024 to 19th March 2024**. The Child Safeguarding Review was announced at the Board of Management Meeting **26th February 2024**.

Signed: Pamela Kearns 
Chairperson of Board of Management

Date: 10th September 2024

Signed: Frances Gibson 
Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management

Date: 10th September 2024

Child Safeguarding Risk Assessment

Written Assessment of Risk of St Mac Dara's Community College

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 [name of school].

1. List of school activities

St Mac Dara's CC has in place a Covid-19 Response Plan for infection control which follows HSE / DES Public Health Guidelines in response up to and including pandemic conditions. These guidelines inform decisions on human protocols hygiene and infection control.

Daily arrival and dismissal of pupils

- Recreation breaks for pupils
- Classroom teaching including one to one SNA and SET activities.
- One-to-one teaching
- One-to-one counselling
- Outdoor teaching activities
- Sporting Activities
- School outings / School trips involving overnight stay and foreign travel
- Use of toilet/changing/shower areas in schools
- Annual Sports Day / Open day, Evening / Local Primary School events / TY Shows / Musicals and Variety Shows / Themed events e.g. Seachtain na Gaeilge / History day / Inclusion Awareness.

Canteen use

House and State Exams.

- 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
- Administration of Medicine and administration of First Aid
- Curricular provision in respect of SPHE, RSE, Stay Safe
- Prevention and dealing with bullying amongst pupils.
- Care of pupils in relation to education of awareness of racism and personal slurs.
- 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, LGBTQI+ children, pupils perceived to be LGBTQI+, pupils of minority religious faiths and of no faith /children in care / children on CPNS.

Recruitment of School Personnel including:

- Teachers/SNA's
- Caretaker/Secretary/Cleaners
- Sports coaches
- External Tutors/Guest Speakers
- Volunteers/Parents in school activities
- Visitors/contractors present in school activities during and after school hours
- Participation by pupils in religious ceremonies/religious instruction external to the school
- Use of Information and Communication Technology by pupils in school
- Online teaching and learning engagement.
- 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 (GDPR).
- After school and weekend use of school premises by other organisations.
- Use of school premises by other organisation during school day
- Evening / Afterschool Supervised study / Homework Club.
- Male/ female teacher supervision with mixed groups while on trips.
- More than one staff member going to matches with a group.
- Code of behaviour for offsite Senior LC PE
- Curricular provision in respect of SPHE, CSPE, RSE, Stay Safe, Wellbeing.
- School site perimeter and external building exits secure during day.
- First response emergency chronic illness training.

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

- Risk of harm due to inadequate supervision of children in school.
- Risk of harm due to inadequate supervision of children in toilets.
- 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 bullying of child
- 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 including on line teaching and learning engagement.
- 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 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, SNA and SET work.
- 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.
- Risk of contracting Covid-19.
- Risks associated with on-line Teaching and Learning.
- Risks associated with traffic flow in the school grounds.
- Base area H has the office presence of management.

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 and Risk Assessment (Mandatory Templates one, two and three)*. All staff, stakeholders, board of management members to avail of relevant training and management of records of training maintained.
- 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*.
- The school implements in full the SPHE/RSE curriculum (Junior and Senior Cycle)

- The school implements in full the Wellbeing Programme at Junior Cycle.
- Student protocol for leaving class and use of toilets.
- 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 and recently ratified LGBTQI+ Policy.
- The school has a yard/playground supervision roster to ensure appropriate supervision of students 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 trips
- The school has a Health and Safety Statement.
- The school adheres to the requirements of the Garda vetting legislation and relevant DES circulars in relation to recruitment and Garda vetting supported by DDLETB.
- The school has a code of conduct for school personnel teaching and non-teaching staff (ETB Policy)
- The school complies with the agreed disciplinary procedures for teaching staff (ETB).
- The school has in place a policy and procedures for the administration of medication to pupils
- The school has in place a policy and procedures for the administration of First Aid with regular 1st Aid training for staff.
- The school has in place a Code of Positive Behaviour for pupils.
- The school has in place an ICT policy in respect of usage of ICT and AUP (Acceptable User Policy) including Internet Safety Awareness Day / Week.
- The school has in place a smart device policy in respect of usage of smart devices by pupils as part of AUP and ICT policies and procedures.
- The school has in place a mobile phone policy and procedure via ICT/AUP/Code of Positive Behaviour policies.
- Teachers have been upskilled in Microsoft Teams and other remote communication methods in response to supporting student welfare during online teaching and learning.
- The school has in place a Critical Incident Management Plan
- The school has in place a policy and clear procedures for one-to-one teaching activities, SNA and SET work.
- 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 pupils of the school undertaking work experience in external organisations.
- Parents are consulted re contacting St Mac Dara's CC should a matter arise and have been upskilled on use of VS Ware.
- Students are made aware of assessed Health and Safety risks in all subjects especially practical subjects.
- Students are made aware of assessed risk of movement of students around the school building.
- The School has a Special Education Policy as part of Inclusion Policy.
- The school has in place a policy and procedure for use of CCTV cameras (ETB).

- The school has in place a mobile phone policy and procedure via AUP/ICT/ Code of Behaviour Policies.
- The school has in place an enhanced supervision rota with provisions for before and after school and a staggered lunch break.
- All staff are trained in Microsoft Applications such as teams supported by DDLETB.
- A member of management has an office / presence in Base Area H.

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.

This risk assessment has been completed by the Board of Management on **19th March 2024**. It shall be reviewed as part of the school’s annual review of its Child Safeguarding Statement. The Child Safeguarding Review was announced at the Board of Management Meeting **26th February 2024**.

Signed: Pamela Kearns 
 Chairperson of Board of Management

Signed: Frances Gibson 
 Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management

Date: 10th September 2024.

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