

# Child Safeguarding Statement



September 2023

# Child Safeguarding Statement of St. Joseph's Mercy Primary School

Roll Number - 16100Q

St Joseph's Mercy Primary 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 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. Joseph's Mercy Primary 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 (revised 2023) as part of this overall Child Safeguarding Statement
- 2 The Designated Liaison Person (DLP) is Ann Murphy, Principal
- 3 The Deputy Designated Liaison Person (Deputy DLP) is Evania Holian , Deputy Principal
- 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.

- 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 (revised 2023) and to the relevant agreed disciplinary procedures for school staff which are published on the DES 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 DES and available on the DES 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 this 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, 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 attached as an appendix to this statement.
  - The various procedures referred to in this Statement can be accessed via the school’s website, the DES website or will be made available on request by the school.
- 6 This statement has been published on the school’s website and has been provided to all members of school personnel, the Parents’ Association, and the patron. It is readily accessible to parents and guardians on request. A copy of this Statement will be made available to TUSLA and the Department if requested.
- 7 This Child Safeguarding Statement will be reviewed annually or as soon as is 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 19<sup>th</sup> September 2023.

Corona McDermott  
Chairperson of Board of Management

Ann Murphy  
Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management

# Written Assessment of Risk of St. Joseph's Mercy Primary School

Roll No. 16100Q

In accordance with section 11 of the Children First Act 2015 and with the requirement of Chapter 8 of the *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017*, the following is the Written Risk Assessment of St Joseph's Mercy Primary School.

## 1. List of School Activities

- Daily arrival and dismissal of pupils
- Recreation breaks for pupils
- Classroom teaching
- One-to-one teaching
- One-to-one counselling
- One-to-one assessments / screening
- Outdoor teaching activities
- Sporting activities
- Swimming for 3<sup>rd</sup> / 4<sup>th</sup> / 5<sup>th</sup> / 6<sup>th</sup> classes
- School outings / trips
- Use of toilet / changing areas in schools
- Annual Sports Day
- Fundraising events involving pupils
- Use of off-site facilities for school activities
- School transport arrangements
- Care of children with special educational needs, including intimate care where needed
- Management of challenging behaviour amongst pupils, including appropriate use of restraint where required
- Administration of Medicine
- Administration of First Aid
- Fire Drills
- Provision of food by Glanmore Foods
- Curricular provision in respect of SPHE, RSE, Stay Safe Programme
- Prevention of, and dealing with, bullying
- Training of school personnel in child protection matters
- Use of external personnel to supplement curriculum
- Key work / small group work / Transition Programme delivered by Navan School Completion Programme personnel
- 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

-Pupils perceived to be LGBT

-Lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender(LGBT) children

-Pupils of minority religious faiths

-Children in care

-Children on CPNS

- Recruitment of school personnel including -  
Teachers/SNAs  
Caretaker/Secretary/Cleaners  
Sports Coaches  
External Tutors/Guest Speakers  
Volunteers/Parents involved with school activities
- Visiting teams or school groups
- Visitors/contractors/parents present in school during school hours
- Personnel from outside agencies
- Visitors/contractors present during after-school activities and during out-of-school hours
- Participation by pupils in religious ceremonies
- Use of Information and Communication Technology by pupils in school
- 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
- Student teachers, or others, undertaking training placement/work experience in school
- Use of photography / other media to record school events
- After-school use of school premises by other organisations
- After-school Homework Club
- Remote learning on an online learning platform (Seesaw) in the case of a school closure
- Opportunities for children to upload homework assignments onto Seesaw in the case of a school closure

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

Risk of harm not being recognised by school personnel - Low

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

Risk of child being harmed in the school by a member of school personnel - Low

Risk of child being harmed in the school by a volunteer or visitor to the school - Low

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 - Low

Risk of harm due to inadequate supervision of children in school - Low

Risk of harm due to inadequate supervision of children while attending out-of-school activities - Low

Risk of harm due to children inappropriately accessing/using computers, social media, phones and other devices while at school - Low

Risk of harm to children with SEN who have particular vulnerabilities - Low

Risk of harm to child while a child is receiving intimate care - Low

Risk of harm due to inadequate Code of Behaviour - Low

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

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 - Low

Risk of harm caused by member of school personnel accessing/circulating inappropriate material via social media, texting, digital device or other manner - Low

Risk of child being harmed in the school by another child - Low

Risk of harm from unauthorised personnel on school grounds – Low

Risk of pupils who are ‘minders’ misunderstanding their roles and dealing with issues instead of reporting them to the supervising teacher - Low

Risk of harm due to bullying of child - Medium

Risk of harm due to inappropriate relationship/communications between a child and another child – Medium

Risk of harm due to children inappropriately accessing / using computers, social media, phones and other devices outside of school - High


**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 (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*
- The school implements in full the Stay Safe Programme
- The school implements in full the SPHE curriculum
- 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 has a yard/playground supervision policy to ensure appropriate supervision of children during assembly, dismissal and breaks. The school has in place 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 DES circulars in relation to recruitment and Garda vetting
- The school has a code 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 and toileting policy 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:
  - has provided each member of school 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
  - maintains records of all staff and board member training
- The school has in place a Code of Behaviour for pupils
- The school has in place an ICT policy in respect of usage of ICT by pupils
- The school has in place a mobile phone policy in respect of usage of mobile phones by pupils
- The school has in place a Critical Incident Management Plan
- The school has in place procedures to deal with First Aid
- The school has in place procedures for the use of external persons to supplement delivery of the curriculum
- The school has in place 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 procedures in respect of student teacher placements

- The school has in place procedures in respect of students undertaking work experience in the school
- The school has in place procedures that parents of junior pupils notify school of person collecting pupil and also when there is any change to this arrangement.

**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*



Signed  Date 19/9/25.

Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed Ann Murphy Date 19/09/23

Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management

## 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'?	Yes
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'?	Yes
3. Does the school's Child Safeguarding Statement include a written assessment of risk as required under the Children First Act 2015?	Yes
4. Has the Board reviewed and updated where necessary the written assessment of risk as part of this overall review?	Yes
5. Has the DLP attended available child protection training?	Yes
6. Has the Deputy DLP attended available child protection training?	Yes
7. Have any members of the Board attended child protection training?	Yes
8. Are there both a DLP and a Deputy DLP currently appointed?	Yes
9. Are the relevant contact details (Tusla and An Garda Síochána) to hand?	Yes
10. Has the Board arrangements in place to communicate the school's Child Safeguarding Statement to new school personnel?	Yes
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?	Yes
12. Has the Board received a Principal's Child Protection Oversight Report at each Board meeting held since the last review was undertaken?	Yes
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?	Yes
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?	Yes
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?	No
16. Has the Board been provided with and reviewed all documents relevant to the Principal's Child Protection Oversight Report?	Yes
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
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?*	N/A

	Yes/No
19. Were child protection matters reported to the Board appropriately recorded in the Board minutes?	Yes
20. Is the Board satisfied that all records relating to child protection are appropriately filed and stored securely?	Yes
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'?	No
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?	N/A
23. Has the Board ensured that the Parents' Association (if any), has been provided with the school's Child Safeguarding Statement?	Yes
24. Has the Board ensured that the patron has been provided with the school's Child Safeguarding Statement?	Yes
25. Has the Board ensured that the school's Child Safeguarding Statement is available to parents on request?	Yes
26. Has the Board ensured that the Stay Safe programme is implemented in full in the school? (applies to primary schools)	Yes
27. Has the Board ensured that the Wellbeing Programme for Junior Cycle students is implemented in full in the school? (applies to post-primary schools)	N/A
28. Has the Board ensured that the SPHE curriculum is implemented in full in the school?	Yes
29. Is the Board satisfied that the statutory requirements for Garda Vetting have been met in respect of all school personnel (employees and volunteers)? *	Yes
30. 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?*	Yes
31. 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)?*	Yes
32. Has the Board considered and addressed any complaints or suggestions for improvements regarding the school's Child Safeguarding Statement?	Yes
33. 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'?	Yes
34. Has the Board sought the feedback of pupils in relation to the school's child safeguarding arrangements?	Yes
35. 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?	Yes
36. Has the Board identified any aspects of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement and/or its implementation that require further improvement?	No
37. 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 ?	N/A
38. 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?	Yes

\*In schools where the ETB is the employer the responsibility for meeting the employer's requirements rests with the ETB concerned. In such cases, this question should be completed following consultation with the ETB.

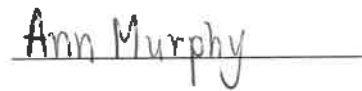
In undertaking this risk assessment, the Board of Management has endeavoured to identify as far as possible the risks of harm that are relevant to this school and to ensure that adequate procedures are in place to manage all risks identified. While it is not possible to foresee and remove all risk of 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 19<sup>th</sup> September 2023. It shall be reviewed as part of the school's annual review of its Child Safeguarding Statement.



Corona McDermott

Chairperson, Board of Management



Ann Murphy

Principal / Secretary to the Board of Management

Date: 19/09/'23