

Malahide/Portmarnock ETNS 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 Malahide/Portmarnock ETNS 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: **Emer Hoy**
- 3 The Deputy Designated Liaison Person (Deputy DLP) is: **Ríona Wise**
- 4 The Relevant Person is: Emer Hoy  
(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:
  - a. recognise that the protection and welfare of children is of paramount importance, regardless of all other considerations
  - b. fully comply with its statutory obligations under the Children First Act 2015 and other relevant legislation relating to the protection and welfare of children
  - c. fully co-operate with the relevant statutory authorities in relation to child protection and welfare matters
  - d. 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
  - e. develop a practice of openness with parents and encourage parental involvement in the education of their children; and
  - f. 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:

- a. 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 website
  - b. 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 gov.ie website
  - c. 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:
    - i. Has provided each member of staff with a copy of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement
    - ii. Ensures all new staff are provided with a copy of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement
    - iii. Encourages staff to avail of relevant training
    - iv. Encourages Board of Management members to avail of relevant training
    - v. The Board of Management maintains records of all staff and Board member training.
  - d. 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.
  - e. 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.
  - f. All registered teachers employed by the school are mandated persons under the Children First Act 2015.
  - g. 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 attached as an appendix to these procedures (Appendix 1)
  - h. The various procedures referred to in this Statement can be accessed via the school's website, the gov.ie website or will be made available on request by the school
- 7 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.
- 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 \_\_\_\_\_.

Signed: Patricia Clerk

Chairperson of BoM

Date:

Signed: Amer Hoy

Principal/Secretary to the BoM

Date:

- Appendix 1: Child Safeguarding Risk Assessment
- Appendix 2: List of Mandated Personnel
- Appendix 3: Checklist for Review of the Child Safeguarding Statement
- Appendix 4: Notification of review of Child Safeguarding Statement
- Appendix 5: Reasonable Grounds for Concern/Threshold of Harm
- Appendix 6: Summary of Reporting Procedures
- Appendix 7: Summary of Record Keeping Requirements
- Appendix 8: Child Protection Disclosure Procedures Checklist
- Appendix 9: Record Sheet
- Appendix 10: Monitoring Suggestions
- Appendix 11: Action Plan
- Appendix 12: Record for Child Protection Conference

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 Malahide/Portmarnock ETNS.

### 1. List of school activities

- Daily arrival and dismissal of pupils
- Pupil attendance
- Recreation breaks for pupils
- Classroom teaching
- Small group work
- One to one activities including teaching, movement breaks, counselling
- Outdoor teaching activities
- Sporting activities
- Remote/Blended Learning including video conferencing
- Curricular Provision in respect of SPHE, RSE, Stay safe
- Managing of challenging behaviour amongst pupils
- Prevention and dealing with bullying amongst pupils
- Application of sanctions under the school's Code of Behaviour including detention of pupils, confiscation of phones etc.
- Administration of Medicine
- Administration of First Aid
- Care of Children with special needs, including intimate care needs
- Care of pupils with specific vulnerabilities/ needs such as
  - Children in care
  - Children on CPNS
  - 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

- Annual Sports Day or fun days
- Use of off-site facilities for school activities / School trips involving overnight stay / Fundraising events involving pupils / School transport arrangements including use of bus escorts
- Use of Information and Communication Technology by staff and pupils in school
- Use of video/photography/other media to record school events
- Students participating in work experience in the school
- After school use of school premises by other organisations
- Recruitment of school personnel including -
  - Teachers
  - SNA's
  - Caretaker/Secretary/Cleaners
  - Sports coaches
  - External Tutors/Guest Speakers
  - Volunteers/Parents in school activities
  - Student teachers/people on work experience
  - Visitors/contractors
- Training of school personnel in Child Protection matters
- Use of external personnel to supplement curriculum eg Sports Coaches

## **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
- 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 possible inadequate supervision of children during remote learning
- Risk of harm due to possible inappropriate use of ICT during periods of remote/blended learning.
- 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

- Risk of harm to child while a child is receiving intimate care
- 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
- Risk of harm due to lack of knowledge if children are not educated in the SPHE programmes
- Risk of harm to pupil if important message from parent not received by pupil

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

#### **Attendance**

Our school attendance will be monitored as per our attendance policy. With regards to child protection we will pay particular attention to trends in non-attendance. We will also monitor non-attendance in correlation with signs of neglect/physical/ emotional abuse.

#### **Behaviour**

Children are encouraged at all times to play co-operatively and inappropriate behaviour will be addressed under our Code of Positive Behaviour. If an incident occurs which we consider to be of a child protection nature we will notify the DLP who will record it and respond to it appropriately.

#### **Bullying**

Bullying behaviour is addressed under our Anti-Bullying policy. If the behaviour involved is of a sexualised nature or regarded as being particularly abusive then the matter will be referred to the DLP.

#### **Children travelling in staff cars**

Members of the school staff will not carry children alone in their cars at any time. Where possible children will be transported by taxi/bus. In case of emergency, when a child needs to be transported by a staff member, they will be accompanied by another staff member and child.

#### **Code of Professional Conduct**

The Teaching Council's Code of Professional Conduct for Teachers applies to all teaching staff in the school. The school complies with the agreed disciplinary procedures for teaching staff.

#### **Curriculum and Ethos**

- The school ethos and the Learn Together curriculum educate the children of the importance of equality. There are age appropriate lessons on the LGBT community.
- The school implements in full the Stay Safe Programme
- The school implements in full the SPHE curriculum

#### **Garda Vetting**

- The school adheres to the requirements of the Garda vetting legislation and relevant DES circulars in relation to recruitment and Garda vetting

- Garda vetting of teaching and non-teaching staff as outlined in DES circular 31/2016 is mandatory for the recruitment and selection of all staff.
- Garda vetting of all volunteers, including parents, is carried out.
- There is a Garda vetted parent present for after school activities.
- Visiting sports coaches and SNAs are garda vetted specifically for our school.

### **Induction of Parents**

All parents are:

- made aware of attendance rules and their implications as laid down in the Education Welfare Act (2000).
- informed of the programmes in place in the school that deal with personal development e.g. RSE, Walk Tall, Stay Safe and SPHE.
- given a copy of the school's enrolment policy, which outlines the procedures parents and children should use when contacting the school if there are absences or concerns of an educational/personal/family matter.
- directed to view the school's Code of Behaviour and Anti-Bullying policies which are available on the school website.

### **One to One Activities**

During one to one teaching the children receiving support are visible through an open door/glass panel. Procedures for one to one teaching are applied to restorative practice sessions, to counselling, to discussions with a child/ren and to movement breaks. Some movement breaks will occur in locations in the playground, where the children are visible through classroom windows. Staff members can use their mobile phones as a means of communication with other staff members if necessary during one to one sessions.

### **Mobile Phones**

- School staff only use their personal mobile phones in the presence of the children used for school related communication and in case of family emergency.
- Personal equipment is not used by staff to take photos/videos of pupils.
- Photos are not accessible to staff off the school premises unless they are on school website.
- At registration, parents sign photo permission for pupil's photo etc to be used on school website.
- At school events parents are asked to refrain from sharing photos taken with others on any form of social media including email.
- The mobile phone policy includes that parents are to be notified if a phone has been confiscated.

### **Record Keeping**

Teachers will keep each child's file updated with results of assessments carried out, dates and details of meetings with parents and notes from parents. Roll books will be updated daily. Sensitive information regarding children will be shared on a need-to-know basis.

### **Remote Learning**

The school has an Acceptable Use Policy and a Smart Phone and Tablet policy in order to promote safe and responsible use of ICT during periods of remote or blended learning.

Strict protocols for staff, parents and children have been put in place for periods of remote or blended learning. A log of video conferencing calls including attendance is recorded by teachers.

### **Relevant policies**

- 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*
- Code of Positive Behaviour policy including Fun Friends Programme
- Critical Incident Management Plan
- ICT Acceptable Use Policy
- Health & Safety Policy
  - The school has in place a policy and procedures for the administration of medication to pupils.
  - Medication is only administered with written parental consent in accordance with Health and Safety policy
  - Two members of staff are present if clothing needs to be removed and for administration of medication
  - The school has in place a policy and procedures for the administration of First Aid
  - Parents indicate on Registration Form if they consent to child being taken by ambulance
  - A member of staff, known to the pupil, would accompany them in ambulance and stay until their parent/guardian arrived
- Parental Involvement Policy
- Volunteer Agreement Form

### **Staff recruitment, training and induction**

Recruitment involves reference and vetting checks.

The school –

- Has provided each member of school staff with a copy of the school's *Child Safeguarding Statement* and associated appendices
- 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
- Has made the *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools, DES, 2017* and *Children First National Guidance, 2017* and the *Children First Act 2015* available to all staff.
- Has ensured that new teachers know how to fill in the roll book correctly online.

### **Supervision**

Supervision procedures are in place at arrival, break times, dismissal, in toilet areas, during whole school activity days and on school tours

- Pre-opening supervision is provided for 10 minutes prior to school opening
- Parents/guardians are made aware that the Board of Management does not take responsibility before this time
- Staff supervise both breaks



- Staff oversee dismissal of pupils
- Adult: pupil ratio of minimum of 1 garda vetted adult to 10 pupils on school tours
- School personnel always stay with children
- Children are not left unattended: emergency green and red card system is used to ask for help from a nearby adult
- Children are only handed over to designated people at end of school day

### Toileting

- **Wetting:** Children will be provided with clean clothes to change themselves. If a child is unable to change themselves without help a member of staff will help in the presence of another staff member.
- **Soiling:** Clean clothes and wipes will be provided for children who can clean and change themselves. The parents of children who are unable to clean and change themselves will be asked to come to the school to clean and change the child. In the event of the parent being unavailable and they agree to it a teacher/SNA will help the child to change in the presence of another member of staff.
- **Intimate Care Needs:** Children with specific toileting/intimate care needs – a procedure will be agreed between the teachers, SNAs and parents in question.

### Visibility

Teachers will ensure that children are visible in the school playground. Children will not be allowed to spend time in classrooms where they would not be under adult supervision. They are not to leave the school playground or to engage with people who are outside of the school playground.

### Visitors

The class teacher always stays with their class (e.g. visitors/guests/coaches/trips /parent-child classes/workshops etc.) Teachers on playground duty are aware of visitors entering the school playground and ascertain their intentions.

Visitors who arrive during school hours are directed to the main entrance, where they will be greeted by a staff member. Visitors badges will be given to all visitors who go further than the reception area.

Visitors are supervised in the discharge of their business by a member of school personnel. Visiting Contractors are not encouraged during the school day. If their presence is unavoidable, they are accompanied by a member of staff.

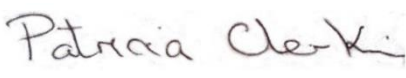
While every effort will be made to adhere to best practice as agreed and outlined above, in the event of an emergency where this is not possible or practicable a full record of the event should be made and reported to the Principal and the BOM.

**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.

This risk assessment has been completed by the Board of Management. It shall be reviewed as part of the school's annual review of its Child Safeguarding Statement.

Signed: 

Chairperson of BoM

Date:

Signed: 

Principal/Secretary to the BoM

Date:

Teachers registered with the Teaching Council

- Kirsty Anderson
- Emer Brady
- Emma Daly
- Louise Butterly
- Jody Byrne
- Lesleyann Cochrane
- Clodagh Mae Coll
- Denise Cunniffe
- Bláthnaid Davitt
- Gráinne Doherty
- Jane Halvey
- Emer Hoy
- Deirdre McBride
- Rory McKeon
- Alan O'Connor
- Kate O'Driscoll
- Laura Petherbridge
- Ciara Rooney
- Maria Skehill
- Amy Toomey
- Lorcan Smith
- Ríona Wise
- Molly Woods
- Orla Wrynne

The *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools* (revised 2023) 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 Addendum to Children First (2019) and the *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools* (revised 2023).

	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 (revised 2023)’?	
2. Is the Board satisfied that the Child Safeguarding Statement is displayed in a prominent place near the main entrance to the school?	
3. 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 (revised 2023)’?	
4. Does the school’s Child Safeguarding Statement include a written assessment of risk as required under the Children First Act 2015? (This includes considering the specific issue of online safety as required by the Addendum to Children First)	
5. Has the Board reviewed and updated where necessary the written assessment of risk as part of this overall review?	
6. Has the Risk Assessment taken account of the risk of harm relevant to online teaching and learning remotely?	
7. Has the DLP attended available child protection training?	
8. Has the Deputy DLP attended available child protection training?	
9. Have any members of the Board attended child protection training?	
10. Are there both a DLP and a Deputy DLP currently appointed?	
11. Are the relevant contact details (Tusla and An Garda Síochána) to hand?	
12. Has the Board arrangements in place to communicate the school’s Child Safeguarding Statement to new school personnel?	
13. 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 (revised 2023)’ and the Children First Act 2015?	

14. Has the Board received a Principal's Child Protection Oversight Report at each Board meeting held since the last review was undertaken?	
15. Since the Board's last review, did each CPOR contain all of the information required under each of the 4 headings set out in sections 9.5 to 9.8 inclusive of the procedures?	
16. Since the Board's last review, has the Board been provided with and reviewed all records relevant to the CPOR?	
17. Is the Board satisfied that the records provided are anonymised and redacted as necessary to ensure that the identities of children and any other parties, including school personnel, to whom the concern or report relates are not disclosed?	
18. Since the Board's last review, have the minutes of each Board meeting appropriately recorded the records provided to the Board as part of CPOR?	
19. Have the minutes of each Board meeting appropriately recorded the CPOR?	
20. 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?	
21. 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?*	
22. Where applicable, were unique identifiers used to record child protection matters in the Board minutes?	
23. Is the Board satisfied that all records relating to child protection are appropriately filed and stored securely?	
24. 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 (revised 2023)?	
25. In relation to any cases identified at question 20 above, has the Board ensured that any notifications required under section 5.6 of the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools (revised 2023) were subsequently issued by the DLP?	
26. Has the Board ensured that the Parents' Association (if any), has been provided with the school's Child Safeguarding Statement?	
27. Has the Board ensured that the patron has been provided with the school's Child Safeguarding Statement?	
28. Has the Board ensured that the school's Child Safeguarding Statement is available to parents on request?	
29. Has the Board ensured that the Stay Safe programme is implemented in full in the school? (applies to primary schools)	
30. Has the Board ensured that the Wellbeing Programme for Junior Cycle students is implemented in full in the school? (applies to post- primary schools)	
31. Has the Board ensured that the SPHE curriculum is implemented in full in the school?	
32. Is the Board satisfied that the statutory requirements for Garda Vetting have been met in respect of all school personnel (employees and volunteers)? *	
33. 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?*	
34. 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)?*	

35. Has the Board considered and addressed any complaints or suggestions for improvements regarding the school's Child Safeguarding Statement?	
36. 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 (Revised 2023)'	
37. Has the Board sought the feedback of pupils in relation to the school's child safeguarding arrangements?	
38. Is the Board satisfied that the 'Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools (revised 2023)' are being fully and adequately implemented by the school?	
39. Has the Board identified any aspects of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement and/or its implementation that require further improvement?	
40. 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 ?	
41. Has the Board ensured that any areas for improvement that were identified in any previous review of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement have been adequately addressed?	

Signed: *Patricia Clerk*

Chairperson of BoM

Date:

Signed: *Lina Hoy*

Principal/Secretary to the BoM

Date:

To: \_\_\_\_\_

The Board of Management of Malahide/Portmarnock ETNS wishes to inform you that:

- The Board of Management's annual review of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement was completed at the Board meeting of \_\_\_\_\_ .
- This review was conducted in accordance with the "Checklist for Review of the Child Safeguarding Statement" published on the Department's website [www.gov.ie](http://www.gov.ie)

Signed: *Patricia Clerk*

Chairperson of BoM

Date:

Signed: *Ana Hay*

Principal/Secretary to the BoM

Date:

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

Types of Child Abuse:

### **Neglect**

The threshold of harm, at which you must report to Tusla under the Children First Act 2015, is reached when you know, believe or have 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**

The threshold of harm at which you must report to Tusla under the Children First Act 2015, is reached when you know, believe or have 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 you must report to Tusla under the Children First Act 2015, is reached when you know, believe or have 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**

If as a mandated person, you know, believe or have reasonable grounds to suspect that a child has been, is being, or is at risk of being sexually abused, then you must report this to Tusla under the Children First Act 2015. As all sexual abuse falls within the category of seriously affecting a child's health, welfare or development, you must submit all concerns about sexual abuse as a mandated person to Tusla.

In accordance with section 2 of the Children First Act, 2015 the defined **threshold of "harm"** in relation to a child is as follows:

*"harm" means, in relation to a child-*

*(a) assault, ill-treatment or neglect of the child in a manner that seriously affects or is likely to seriously affect the child's health, development or welfare, or*

*(b) sexual abuse of the child,*

*whether caused by a single act, omission or circumstance or a series or combination of acts, omissions or circumstances, or otherwise;"*



*“ill-treatment” means, in relation to a child, to abandon or cruelly treat the child, or to cause or procure or allow the child to be abandoned or cruelly treated;*

*“neglect” means, in relation to a child, to deprive the child of adequate food, warmth, clothing, hygiene, supervision, safety or medical care;*

*“welfare” includes, in relation to a child, the moral, intellectual, physical, emotional and social welfare of the child.”*

Below is a summary of the actions to be taken in relation to Child Protection Concerns. These give an outline and it is important to take time to consult the [Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools](#) (revised 2023) for details before proceeding. Chapter 5 contains the details of Reporting Concerns.

Allegations of abuse made against school staff may require immediate action involving suspension of the teacher, SNA or member of ancillary staff. The Board of Management (BoM) should always seek comprehensive legal advice before embarking on such action.

**When a Registered Teacher has a Child Protection Concern**  
(Procedures 5.1.1 / 5.1.2)

A Teacher will immediately report a child protection concern to the DLP. The Teacher will work with the DLP on the reporting procedures.

A registered teacher is a mandated person and has a statutory obligation to make a mandated report to Tusla. This will normally be done by making a joint mandated report with the DLP.

**When someone else in the School Community has a Child Protection Concern**

**SNA/Ancillary Staff** – Report Concern to DLP (Procedures 5.1.1 / 5.1.2)

**Parent/Guardian** - Report Concern to DLP (Procedures 5.6)

**Actions of DLP on becoming aware of a Concern**

(Procedures 5.1.1 / 5.1.2)

Open a Secure File – use child’s Clár Uimhir

Record all details of the Concern

Consult:

Resource Bundle and PAMs

Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools (Revised

2023)

**Reporting Procedures**

Children First National Guidelines 2017

(Procedures 5.3 / 5.4)

**Are there Reasonable Grounds for Concern? Have the Thresholds for Harm been reached?**

If yes – Make a mandated report to TUSLA

If unsure – **Consult with TUSLA and follow advice given.** Be clear that you are consulting only and do not give details of persons involved

If in any doubt – make a mandated report

If thresholds not reached, but you have concerns – make a report

**If TUSLA are not available and the case warrants immediate response, report to Gardaí**

### **Records of Reporting**

Record the details of the concern in the file  
Keep records of all reports made to TUSLA or Gardaí  
Record details of advice sought:  
    The person you spoke to  
    The advice given

### **When the DLP decides not to make a Report to TUSLA**

**(Procedures 5.3.8)**

Inform the reporting person in writing of the decision not to make a report  
Inform the reporting person that they may make a report to TUSLA and give the school a copy  
Keep copies of the above in the file  
Keep a copy of any report by the reporting person in the file  
Include all details in your next oversight report to the BoM

### **Informing Parents**

**(Children First Chapter 3 P.25 and Procedures 5.3.6)**

A school is not required to inform the family that a report is being made to Tusla. It is good practice however to tell the family that a report is being made and the reasons for the decision.

It is not necessary to inform the family if by doing so:  
    the child will be placed at further risk  
    might impair Tusla's ability to carry out a risk assessment  
    you believe that you are putting yourself at risk of harm from the family

The DLP may seek advice from TUSLA regarding informing the family. A record shall be made of the information communicated by the DLP to the parent/carer. A decision by the DLP not to inform a parent/carer shall be recorded together with the reasons for not doing so.

In any case, where a registered teacher is submitting a report to Tusla, the DLP, rather than the teacher concerned, shall assume the responsibility for informing the parent/carer.

### **Child Protection Oversight Report (CPOR)**

**(Procedures 5.5)**

The Principal (normally DLP) will make a CPOR at every BoM meeting. It will detail:

Any allegations of abuse raised in relation to school staff since the last BoM meeting

Other child protection concerns raised in relation to any child since the last BoM meeting

Child protection concerns regarding alleged bullying behaviour since the last BoM meeting

Summary data in respect of Reporting

### **TUSLA Reporting Forms**

TUSLA has 2 Reporting Forms

Child Protection and Welfare Report Form

Click [here](#) for Form and Guidance

Notes

Retrospective Abuse Report Form

Click [here](#) for Form and Guidance

The section references below relate to *'Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017'* and summarise the main record-keeping requirements set out in those procedures as follows:

**Section 3.4** sets out requirements on individual members of the school staff to record child protection concerns that they may have, including disclosures from children and any actions taken in respect of same

**Section 5.1.1** requires that the DLP shall make a written record of any concern brought to his or her attention by a member of the school staff and will place this record in a secure location

**Section 5.3.3** requires that in all cases where the DLP has sought the advice of Tusla, the DLP will retain a record of the consultation which will note the date, the name of the Tusla official and the advice given

**Section 3.4.4** requires that 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 taken by the DLP and of any further communications with Tusla, An Garda Síochana or other parties in relation to that report

**Section 3.4.5** requires that all records created shall be regarded as highly confidential and placed in a secure location

**Section 3.4.6** requires that to allow for the effective recording and tracking of relevant records and actions, 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

**Section 9.4** requires that a Child Protection Oversight Report must be provided to the Board of Management (BoM), as part of the principal's report to the board, at every BoM meeting. The information that will be provided in this report is set out at sections 9.5 to 9.8 of these procedures

**Sections 9.5, 9.6 and 9.7** provide that the minutes of BoM meetings will record child protection matters by reference to the unique code or serial number assigned to the case/parties concerned

**Section 5.3.6** requires that where the DLP informs a parent/carer that a report concerning his or her child is being made, a record will be made of the information communicated by the DLP to the parent/carer. It also requires that a decision by the DLP not to inform a parent/carer shall be recorded together with the reasons for not doing so

**Section 5.3.8** requires that if the DLP decides that the concern of the member of school personnel, including that of a mandated person should not be reported to Tusla, the DLP shall give the member of the school staff a clear statement, in writing, as to the reasons why action is not being taken. A copy of this statement shall be retained by the DLP. Where that member of the school staff decides to make a report to Tusla, he or she must provide the DLP with a copy of that report

**Section 5.6** requires that where the DLP issues a notification to a parent in accordance with that section, a copy of that notification shall be retained by the DLP

**Section 3.5.4** requires the BoM to ensure that arrangements are in place to ensure that the DDLP can access relevant records when required

**Section 8.13.6** requires that records of the annual review of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement and its outcome shall be retained and made available, if requested, to the patron and/or the Department.

The above is not intended to be an exhaustive list of the record keeping requirements in these procedures and school personnel should ensure that records are maintained in line with the requirements set out in these procedures.

**If a child discloses information to you:**

- (a) It is important to **stay calm** and not to show any extreme reaction to what the child is saying. Listen **compassionately** and take what the child is saying seriously;
- (b) It should be understood that the child has decided to tell about something very important and has taken a risk to do so. **The experience of telling should be a positive one** so that the child will not mind talking to those involved;
- (c) The child should understand that it is **not possible that any information will be kept a secret**;
- (d) **No judgmental statement** should be made about the person against whom the allegation is made;
- (e) **No promises** should be made that the abuse will stop.
- (f) The child should not be questioned unless the nature of what he/she is saying is unclear. **Leading questions should be avoided**. Open, non-specific questions should be used such as “Can you explain to me what you mean by that?”;
- (g) The **child** should be **given some indication of what would happen next**, such as informing the Designated Liaison Person, parents/carers, HSE or possibly An Garda Síochána. It should be kept in mind that the child may have been threatened and may feel vulnerable at this stage;
- (h) **Record** the disclosure immediately afterwards using, as far as possible, the child’s own words. Note Date, time and child’s registration number, sketching signs of physical injury on recording sheet.
- (i) Give this written report to the **D.L.P.** signed and dated.

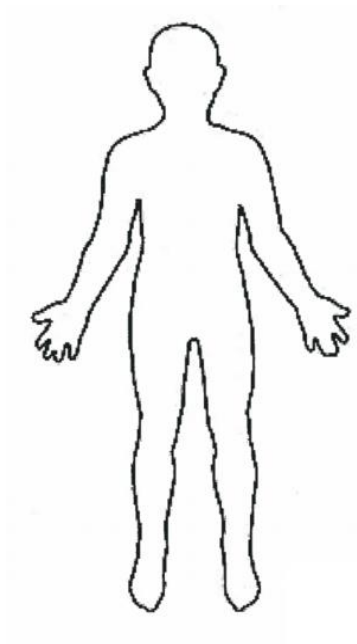
**Useful Hint: Enter your observations under the various headings as appropriate. This will help to categorise your observations and enable you to note an emerging pattern or a deteriorating situation**

Possible Areas for Monitoring	Best Practice Suggestions
<p><b>Malahide Portmarnock Educate Together NS</b> Using agreed record form ensures school standard is applied.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Record observations using code to protect anonymity of child</li> <li>Keep in secure place</li> <li>Strictly confidential</li> </ul>
<p><b>Attendance and Punctuality</b> Dates and times are important, since patterns or absence or lateness can be very revealing. If late, note if brought to school by parent/carer/older sibling and record any explanation offered</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Remember to sign and date each entry</li> </ul>
<p><b>Appearance, Hygiene and Care</b> Record observations of the child's appearance, for example, poor hygiene, inappropriate clothing, no lunch</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Record observations in chronological order</li> </ul>
<p><b>Physical Injury</b> Give detailed description including, in the child's or carer's own words, if any explanation is offered.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Include sketch of injury, if appropriate</li> </ul>
<p><b>Child's Behaviour</b> A child may become increasingly aggressive, tense, unresponsive or show other signs of distress. Any sexualised behaviour should be noted.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describe what you have observed factually</li> </ul>
<p><b>Child's Language</b> The child may not have the language/be afraid to verbalise clearly what is happening. They may however drop hints or refer to what is happening obliquely.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Record child's exact words, not the adult equivalents</li> </ul>
<p><b>Child's Drawings, Writing or Play</b> A young child may show few signs of abuse when he/she experiences a sense of security in a busy, structured classroom setting therefore careful observation of the child in less formal or unstructured settings are important. Always include the context in your record e.g. 'when returning from the PE Room', 'during small break', 'when lining up for home time.'</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Remember context can be very important</li> </ul>
<p><b>Mood changes</b> Child may, for example, become quiet and tense towards end of day or if collected by a certain adult. This might also happen on certain days or before certain activities. Again, remember to include the context In your recording.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Note time, context and situation – facts only</li> </ul>

**Remember monitoring should be systematic, continuous and requires perseverance**



Code		
Date	Observation	Signed
<b>Indicate signs of injury, if necessary, on the outline below:</b>		



**Signed:**

**Date:**





<b>Code</b>		
<b>Date</b>	<b>Record of conversation/event/observation</b>	
<b>Signed by DLP:</b>		<b>Date:</b>
<b>Signed by member of school personnel (where applicable):</b>		<b>Date:</b>

Code		TUSLA Reference Number	
<b>Relevant individuals</b> <b>Mandated people:</b> <b>Child:</b> <b>Alleged person:</b> <b>Parents/Guardians/Carers:</b>			
<b>Record of How Concern Came to Attention</b>			
<b>Was the registered teacher informed that advice was being sought?</b>			
<b>Record of Consultation with TUSLA</b> Date: _____ Time: _____ Name of TUSLA official: _____ Advice: _____			
<b>Was the registered teacher provided with the advice received?</b>			
<b>Was a report submitted to TUSLA?</b> <b>Is the report attached?</b>			
<b>Further Action/Communication with TUSLA</b>			
<b>Information Communicated by DLP to Parent/Guardian/Carer when a report is/has being made</b>			
<b>Information Communicated by Parent/Guardian/Carer to DLP when a report is/has being made</b>			
<b>Record of decision not to inform the Parent/Guardian/Carer (include reasons) when a report is/has being made</b>			
<b>Clear statement provided to the relevant staff member as to the reasons why his/her concern is not being reported and that staff member was advised that he/she may still report concern to TUSLA</b>			
<b>Signed by DLP:</b>  <b>Date:</b>		<b>Signed by member of school personnel (where applicable)</b>  <b>Date:</b>	



**Child Protection – Template statement from DLP to a member of school personnel as to the reasons why a report has not been made to Tusla (Section 5.3.8 of the Procedures)**

Dear \_\_\_\_\_ (member of school personnel’s full name)

In relation to the concern which you brought to my attention on \_\_\_\_\_ (dd/mm/year), please be advised that I have decided not to report the matter to Tusla for the following reason:

<i>Tick appropriate box</i>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	I have sought advice from Tusla and have been advised that the matter does not require reporting to Tusla
<b>OR</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other reasons

Where the DLP has ticked ‘Other reasons’, those reasons must be set out below:

**If you (member of school personnel) remain concerned about the situation, you are free to consult with Tusla and/or report to Tusla. If you decide to report the concern to Tusla, you must provide a copy of that report to me as DLP.**

Signed by DLP:		Date:	
----------------	--	-------	--

**I acknowledge receiving this statement from the DLP:**

Signed by member of school personnel:		Date:	
---------------------------------------	--	-------	--





Appendix 15: Record for Child  
Protection Conference

<b>Child's Details</b>	Name: Age:
<b>Academic performance</b>	Work and attainment during this year:  Any significant changes from previous years:
<b>Behaviour</b>	School yard:  Classroom:  Any significant changes in behaviour:
<b>Social skills</b>	Interaction with adults, peers:  Does child interact with own age, older or younger children:  Does the child have a friend/group of friends:
<b>Talents and activities</b>	Any activities child engaged with:
<b>Schooling issues</b>	Attendance, clothes, sleep, lunches, school essentials, homework:  Parental involvement with education:  Concerns regarding behaviour:  Other children in family:
<b>Educational assessment</b>	Child's progress – current situation, future needs: