



Child Safeguarding Statement

Sutton Park School is a multi-denominational, co-educational primary and post-primary school providing primary and post-primary education to pupils from Junior Infants to Sixth 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 Sutton Park School has agreed the Child Safeguarding Statement set out in this document.

- 1 The Board of Management has adopted and will implement fully and without modification the Department's Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools 2017 as part of this overall Child Safeguarding Statement
- 2 The Designated Liaison Person (DLP) is Ronan Walsh
- 3 The Deputy Designated Liaison Person (Deputy DLP) is Deirdre Mullen
- 4 The Board of Management recognises that child protection and welfare considerations permeate all aspects of school life and must be reflected in all school 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 Data Protection Acts 1988 - 2018 do not prevent the sharing of information on a reasonable and proportionate basis for the purposes of Child Protection and where there may be a conflict between confidentiality and the safety and welfare of the child, the latter will always be the primary consideration.]*
- ensure that regardless of age, ability or disability, race, religion or belief, gender identity, sexual orientation and socio-economic background, all children shall have a positive and enjoyable learning experience in a safe and child centred environment. Sutton Park School acknowledges that young children, children with disabilities and/or SEN, LGBT+ children and those from ethnic minority communities can be particularly vulnerable to harm and accepts responsibility to take reasonable and appropriate steps to ensure their welfare.

According to the Children First Act 2015, Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children (2017) and the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools (2017), a



‘child’ is defined as ‘anyone who is under 18 years of age excluding a person who is or who has been married’. The school will also adhere to the above principles in relation to any adult pupil with a special vulnerability.

* **Important Note:** It should be understood that risk in the context of this Safeguarding Statement and 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).

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. Furthermore, the Board of Management will undertake to ensure that:
 - New staff members and volunteers are required to obtain vetting disclosures through the school
 - References are sought from previous employers or institutions of study
 - Robust safeguarding arrangements and procedures are in operation and continually updated.
- 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 abovenamed 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, and all school personnel are required to adhere to the procedures set out in the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017 in relation to mandated reporting under the Children First Act 2015:



- School personnel should in the first instance and without delay seek advice and guidance from the DLP (Head of School), if they have a concern regarding Child Protection and Welfare
- Where the level of concern is at or above the defined 'threshold of harm', this will necessitate a 'mandated report'. The 'threshold of harm' is defined as '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'.
- If the level of concern is at or above this threshold, the mandated person must submit (jointly with the DLP) a mandated report.
- Reasonable Grounds for Concern include:
 - a) Evidence (e.g. injury or behaviour) that is consistent with abuse and is unlikely to have been caused in any other way
 - b) Any concern about possible sexual abuse
 - c) Consistent signs that a child is suffering from emotional or physical neglect
 - d) A child saying or indicating by other means that he or she has been abused
 - e) Admission or indication by an adult or a child of an alleged abuse they committed
 - f) An account from a person who saw the child being abused
- Where the DLP and registered teacher / mandated person (or other non-mandated member of school personnel reporting a concern) are satisfied that the threshold of harm has not been breached, but agree that there are reasonable grounds for concern, the DLP has responsibility to without delay report the concern to Tusla. In such cases (i.e. where the registered teacher is satisfied that the concern is not at or above the defined threshold of harm for a mandated report) the teacher is not required to submit a report to Tusla.
- In the event that the concern is in relation to the Designated Liaison Person, the concern should be reported to the Chairperson of the Board of Management.
- In the event of the absence of the DLP, the Deputy Designated Liaison Person should be involved.
- The DLP / DDLP / Chairperson may then report to or consult with TUSLA to initiate an appropriate response pathway.
- Where contact with TUSLA cannot be established and if it is deemed that there is an immediate risk to the safety and welfare of the child concerned, the DLP should contact the Gardaí.
- In the event that the DLP determines that a report to TUSLA is not necessary, the DLP/DDLP must advise the member of staff in writing, detailing their reasons for not doing so. Should the staff member not be satisfied with the DLP/DDLP's decision not to report and have reasonable grounds for concern for the safety and welfare of the child, the Protection for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act 1998 enables the staff member to make a separate report to TUSLA 'reasonably and in good faith' and they have the right to do so. The staff member will not be penalised for taking such action notwithstanding any previous decisions to the contrary by the DLP/DDLP.
- The DLP / DDLP is not obliged to advise parents / caregivers prior to making a report if it is deemed that so doing may further endanger the child or the person making the report, or if so doing would compromise the Child and Family Agency's ability to carry out a risk assessment.
- The DLP will ensure appropriate action is taken in the event of incidents / reasonable grounds for concern and provide support and advice to the individuals who raise or disclose the concern.
- The DLP will ensure the confidential, detailed and accurate records of all safeguarding concerns are maintained and securely stored.



- 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.
- 6 This statement has been published on the school's website and has been provided to all members of school personnel, the Parent Teacher 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 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 3 March 2022.

This Child Safeguarding Statement was reviewed by the Board of Management on 3 March 2022 [most recent review date].

Signed:

Chairperson of Board of Management

Date: 8 May 2023

Signed:

Head of School /Secretary to the BOM

Date: 8 May 2023



Child Safeguarding Risk Assessment

Written Assessment of Risk at Sutton Park School

In accordance with section 11 of the Children First Act 2015 and with the requirements of Chapter 8 of the *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017*, the following is the Written Risk Assessment of Sutton Park School.

1. List of school activities

- Daily registration and dismissal of students
- Recreation breaks for students
- Classroom teaching
- One-to-one teaching
- One-to-one learning support
- One-to-one counselling
- Outdoor teaching activities
- Online teaching and learning
- Sporting activities
- School outings
- School trips involving overnight stay
- School trips involving international travel
- Use of toilet / changing facilities
- Annual Sports Day
- Fundraising events involving students
- Use of off-site facilities for school activities
- School transport arrangements including use of bus escorts
- Care of children with SEN including, where necessary, intimate care
- Care of any vulnerable adult students including, where necessary, intimate care
- Management of challenging behaviour among students
- Management of provision of food and drink
- Administration of medicine and First Aid
- Curricular provision in respect of SPHE, RSE, Stay Safe programmes
- Prevention and management of bullying amongst students
- 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:
 - Students from ethnic minorities
 - Members of the Traveller Community
 - LGBT+ children
 - Students of minority religious faiths
 - Children in care
 - Children on the Child Protection Notification System (CPNS)
 - Children with additional medical needs
- Recruitment of school personnel including:
 - Teachers / SNA's
 - Caretakers
 - Administration / Business staff



- Cleaning staff
- Sports Coaches
- External Tutors / Guest Speakers
- Volunteers / Parents in school activities
- Visitors / Contractors present in school during school hours
- Visitors / Contractors present during school activities
- Participation by students in religious ceremonies / instruction external to the school
- Use of ICT by students in school, including social media
- Application of sanctions under the school's Code of Conduct
- 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 the school day
- Homework club / evening study

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 participating in out of school activities e.g. school trip, swimming lessons
- Risk of harm due to inappropriate use of online 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
- 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 conduct
- Risk of harm in one-to-one teaching, counselling, coaching
- Risk of harm caused by member of school personnel communicating with students 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



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

- All school personnel (including new staff) are provided with a copy of the school's *Child Safeguarding Statement*
- The *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017* are made available to all school personnel
- 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* and its Addendum (2019)
- All School personnel receive training on the Children First Act 2015 and the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017 through TUSLA's Universal e-Learning Programme, the Staff Handbook and at whole school staff meetings at the beginning of each academic year. All school personnel will be made aware that the Designated Liaison Person is the Head of School and of his role. School personnel will also be made aware of who the deputy Designated Liaison Person is and of her role
- 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 Anti-Bullying policy is reviewed annually and is published on the school website. Year Heads and Form Tutors will review the Anti-Bullying Code with all pupils at the start of each school year
- The school has an Anti-Racism Policy and undertakes anti-racism awareness initiatives
- The school has a grounds 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 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 and procedures. IEPs are drafted and stored centrally and communicated to all relevant school personnel to ensure continuity of care. The Student Support Team, SNAs and Learning Resource staff closely monitor the pastoral needs of such students and promptly address concerns and issues as they arise
- The school implements individual intimate care plans in respect of students who require such care
- The school has in place a policy and procedures for the administration of medication to students
- The school ensures that all Board of Management members avail of Child Protection training and 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 Conduct for students
- The school has an Acceptable Usage Policy in place governing the use of smart phones and tablet devices in the school by students as per circular 0038/2018 to include provision for online teaching and learning, and has communicated this policy to parents. All school personnel and students must adhere to the principles outlined in the school's Acceptable Usage policy which is published on the school website, in the staff handbook and on student



Year teams. Pupils and parents / guardians must on admission read the ICT acceptable usage agreement, and Year Heads and Form Tutors will review the ICT Code with pupils at the start of each school year.

- The school has in place a policy
- The school has in place a Critical Incident Management Plan
- The school has in place procedures for the use of external persons to supplement delivery of the curriculum. Guest speakers are required to register as visitors at reception on arrival and when they are addressing pupils, there will always be a member of staff present
- The school has in place procedures for the use of external sports coaches
- All parents (in particular Board and PTA members) involved in any capacity in the operation of this school are required to be Garda vetted in order to volunteer for any school activity such as themed weeks, cake sales, school trips and sporting activities etc.
- The school has in place clear procedures for one-to-one teaching and activities and, in particular, ensures that all one-to-one rooms have visibility for both student and teacher / counsellor via windows installed in doors or open-door policy and practice – this is for the protection of both student and teacher
- The school has in place a Counselling Policy and clear procedures for one-to-one counselling
- The school has in place clear procedures in respect of student teacher placements. Student teachers will be under the guidance of a mentor and are Garda vetted
- The school has in place clear procedures in respect of students undertaking work experience in the school
- The school has in place clear procedures in respect of pupils of the school undertaking work experience in external organisations
- All students participating in external religious ceremonies are always accompanied by a member of the Sutton Park School staff
- Staff will ensure appropriate checks are conducted into all aspects of off- site trips. Staff will confirm that sleeping arrangements can accommodate children in proximity to supervising staff. Staff will ensure that there is provision for separate sleeping quarters for male and female pupils. Staff will ensure that all transport used is compliant with statutory requirements. Staff will ensure that any accompanying adults are Garda vetted
- All visitors and contractors entering the school are required to sign in at reception and, for the purposes of infection prevention and control, are required to complete a ‘Visitor & Contractor COVID-19 Declaration’ form and a ‘Contact Log’ form. 5 20.10.21 All visits to the school are by prior appointment only and access to school buildings is not permitted without same
- Recording of school events is only done with prior consent and the Acceptable Usage Policy is applied in all cases. Sharing of any images and recordings is done with the prior consent of any and all subjects of such images and recordings and is conducted for educational and/or school purposes only
- All transport is sourced and co-ordinated centrally through the school’s business office using trusted service providers. Whether transport is provided by private bus companies or by Dublin Bus (through third party providers), the school seeks written confirmation that all bus drivers have been Garda vetted
- The implications for duty of care, reasonable grounds for concern and reporting arising out of extended periods of online learning due to COVID-19 are dealt with in Appendix 1: Child Protection & COVID-19



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.