

Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment

St. Thomas' S.N.S. is a primary school providing primary education to pupils from third 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 2017](#) and [Tusla Guidance on the preparation of Child Safeguarding Statements](#), the Board of Management of St. Thomas SNS 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 John Rennick
- 3 The Deputy Designated Liaison Person (Deputy DLP) is Matthew Campbell
- 4 The Relevant Person is John Rennick
(The relevant person is one who can provide information in respect of how the child safeguarding statement was developed and will be able to provide the statement on request. In a school setting the relevant person shall be the designated liaison person.)
- 5 The Board of Management recognises that child protection and welfare considerations permeate all aspects of school life and must be reflected in all of the school's policies, procedures, practices and activities. In its policies, procedures, practices and activities, the school will adhere to the following principles of best practice in child protection and welfare:

The school will:

- recognise that the protection and welfare of children is of paramount importance, regardless of all other considerations;
- fully comply with its statutory obligations under the Children First Act 2015 and other relevant legislation relating to the protection and welfare of children;
- fully cooperate with the relevant statutory authorities in relation to child protection and welfare matters;
- adopt safe practices to minimise the possibility of harm or accidents happening to children and protect workers from the necessity to take unnecessary risks that may leave themselves open to accusations of abuse or neglect;
- develop a practice of openness with parents and encourage parental involvement in the education of their children; and
- fully respect confidentiality requirements in dealing with child protection matters.

The school will also adhere to the above principles in relation to any adult pupil with a special vulnerability.

6 The following procedures/measures are in place:

- In relation to any member of staff who is the subject of any investigation (howsoever described) in respect of any act, omission or circumstance in respect of a child attending the school, the school adheres to the relevant procedures set out in Chapter 7 of the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017 and to the relevant agreed disciplinary procedures for school staff which are published on the DE website.
- In relation to the selection or recruitment of staff and their suitability to work with children, the school adheres to the statutory vetting requirements of the [National Vetting Bureau \(Children and Vulnerable Persons\) Acts 2012 to 2016](#) and to the wider duty of care guidance set out in relevant Garda vetting and recruitment circulars published by the Department of Education and available on the DE website.
- In relation to the provision of information and, where necessary, instruction and training, to staff in respect of the identification of the occurrence of harm (as defined in the 2015 Act) the school-
 - Has provided each member of staff with a copy of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement
 - Ensures all new staff are provided with a copy of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement
 - Encourages staff to avail of relevant training
 - Encourages Board of Management members to avail of relevant training
 - The Board of Management maintains records of all staff and Board member training
- In relation to reporting of child protection concerns to Tusla, all school personnel are required to adhere to the procedures set out in the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017, including in the case of registered teachers, those in relation to mandated reporting under the Children First Act 2015.
- In this school the Board has appointed the above named DLP as the "relevant person" (as defined in the Children First Act 2015) to be the first point of contact in respect of the schools child safeguarding statement.
- All registered teachers employed by the school are mandated persons under the Children First Act 2015.

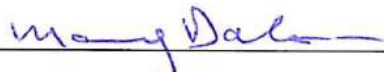
- In accordance with the Children First Act 2015 and the Addendum to Children First (2019), the Board has carried out an assessment of any potential for harm to a child while attending the school or participating in school activities. A written assessment setting out the areas of risk identified and the school's procedures for managing those risks is included with the Child Safeguarding Statement.
- The various procedures referred to in this Statement can be accessed via the school's website, the DE website or will be made available on request by the school.


Note: The above is not intended as an exhaustive list. Individual Boards of Management shall also include in this section such other procedures/measures that are of relevance to the school in question.

- 7 This statement has been published on the school's website and has been provided to all members of school personnel, the Parents' Association (if any) and the patron. It is readily accessible to parents and guardians on request. A copy of this Statement will be made available to Tusla and the Department if requested.
- 8 This Child Safeguarding Statement will be reviewed annually or as soon as practicable after there has been a material change in any matter to which this statement refers.

This Child Safeguarding Statement was adopted by the Board of Management on 19th October 2024

This Child Safeguarding Statement was reviewed by the Board of Management on 19th October 2024

Signed: 
Mary Dalton (Chairperson BOM)

Signed: 
John Rennick (School Principal)

Child Safeguarding Risk Assessment

Written Assessment of Risk of St. Thomas' Senior National School

In accordance with section 11 of the Children First Act 2015 and with the requirement of Chapter 8 of the *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2023*, the following is the Written Risk Assessment of St. Thomas' Senior National School.

| List of School Activities | The School has identified the following Risk of Harm | The School has the following Procedures in place to address risk identified in this assessment |
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| Training of school personnel in Child Protection matters | Risk of harm not being recognised by school personnel Risk of harm not being reported properly and promptly by school personnel | Child Safeguarding Statement & DES Child Protection procedures made available to all staff All new staff are provided with copy of Child Safeguarding Statement DLP & DDLP to attend PDST face to face training All Staff to view Tusla training module & any other online training offered by PDST BOM members to avail of relevant training Maintains records of all staff and board training |
| Recruitment of school personnel | Harm by school personnel | School adheres to requirements of Garda Vetting legislation and relevant DES circulars in relation to recruitment and Garda Vetting |
| Curricular Provision in respect of SPHE, RSE, Stay safe programme. | Non-teaching of SPHE programme or not teaching programmes in full | School implements in full the SPHE curriculum including the RSE and Stay Safe in full Reminders at staff meetings, newsletters and weekly memo |
| Daily arrival and dismissal of pupils | Harm from other pupils, unknown adults on the playground | Arrival and dismissal policy & procedures Supervision policy Health & safety policy |
| Recreation breaks for pupils | Injury to pupils/Bullying Risk of harm due to inadequate supervision of pupils in school Risk of harm due to inadequate code of behaviour Harm not recognised or properly or promptly reported | Policy & Procedures in place Supervision rota Health & safety policy Code of Behaviour Anti-Bullying Policy Accident Report Forms Following up of incidents on yard |

| List of School Activities | The School has identified the following Risk of Harm | The School has the following Procedures in place to address risk identified in this assessment |
|---|--|---|
| Classroom teaching | Harm by school personnel | Follow best practice |
| Outdoor teaching activities | Risk of harm due to inadequate supervision of pupils in school | Supervision policy – adult supervision at all times Code of Behaviour /Health and safety policy SNA access for identified pupils |
| Managing of challenging behaviour amongst pupils, including appropriate use of restraint where required | Risk of harm due to inadequate code of behaviour Injury to pupils and staff | Code of Behaviour Health & safety policy Teacher awareness training from SESS, NCSE Staff Training scheduled for September 2018 |
| Prevention and dealing with bullying amongst pupils | Risk of harm due to bullying of a child | Anti-bullying policy Circles in classroom Restorative Practice procedures |
| Use of mobile phones amongst pupils. | Risk of harm due to cyber bullying of a child | Mobile phone policy in respect of usage of mobile phones Code of Behaviour Internet policy |
| One to one teaching | Risk of harm to pupils in one to one teaching, counselling, or supervising situation | Policy and procedures in place for 1:1 teaching activities Inform parents Open doors / or have glass in window Table between teacher and pupil |
| One to one supervision by SNAs | Risk of harm to pupils in one to one supervising situation | Policy and procedures in place Don't be in a closed classroom |
| External personnel working with pupils on 1:1 (NEPS/ISPCC/NEWB/Art Therapy) | Risk of harm to pupils in one to one teaching, counselling, coaching situation | Policy & procedures in place Policy and Procedures in respect of working on 1:1 basis in place |
| External Tutors /Guest Speakers | Risk of harm to pupils by visitor to school | Vetting procedures in place Policy and procedures in place for use of external personnel |

| List of School Activities | The School has identified the following Risk of Harm | The School has the following Procedures in place to address risk identified in this assessment |
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| Use of external personnel to supplement curriculum | Harm to pupils | Vetting Procedures in place Policy and procedures in place |
| Use of external personnel to support sports and other extracurricular activities | Harm to pupils | Vetting procedures in place Policy and procedures in place for use of external sports coaches |
| Volunteers/Parents involved in school activities | Harm to pupils by volunteers in school | Vetting procedures in place Policy for Parents/Volunteers |
| Students participating in work experience in the school | Harm to pupils to pupils by | Vetting procedures in place Policy and procedures in place in respect of students undertaking work experience in the school |
| Student teachers undertaking training placement in school | Risk of harm to pupils | Vetting procedures in place Policy and procedures in place in respect of student teacher placements |
| Visitors / Contractors present during school day | Risk of harm to pupils while visitors are in the school | Supervision policy Policy and procedures in place |
| Visitors invited to the school - Annual Christmas Show / Grandparent's Day | Risk of harm to pupils while visitors are in the school | Policy and procedures in place |
| Care of pupils with specific vulnerabilities/ needs such as <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Pupils with Special Educational Needs Pupils from ethnic minorities/migrants <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Members of the Traveller community ● Lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBT) children | Risk of harm to pupils who may be particularly vulnerable to bullying | Special Educational Needs Policy Anti-bullying policy Code of Behaviour Additional teaching of SPHE programme as necessary to pupils with SEN as necessary Access to support teacher |

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Pupils perceived to be LGBT ● Pupils of minority religious faiths ● Children in care ● Children on CPNS | | |
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| Swimming | Risk of harm to pupils by member of school personnel, member of staff of another organisation, or other person while child participating in swimming | Supervision Child protection procedures |
| Sporting Activities | Risk of harm to pupils by member of school personnel, member of staff of another organisation, or other person while child participating in sporting activities | Supervision Child protection procedures Vetting procedures |
| School Tours | Risk of harm due to inadequate supervision while on school tour Risk of harm by member of school personnel, member of staff of another organisation, or other person while child participating in school tours | Supervision Procedures in place Critical incident policy |
| Use of off-site facilities for school activities | Risk of harm due to inadequate supervision while attending out of school activities | Policy and procedures in place Critical incident policy Supervision policy |
| School transport arrangements - swimming / trips / matches/outings | Harm to pupils Harm not recognised or properly or promptly reported | Supervision procedures – two staff members on the bus Pupils will never be unsupervised by school staff while on bus |
| Administration of First Aid | Lack of training of staff | Policy and procedures in place for administration of First Aid to pupils |
| Administration of Medicine | Risk of harm to pupils by being in possession of medicines | Policy and procedures in place for administration of Medication to pupils |
| Use of video/photography/other media to record school events | Risk of harm to pupils through inappropriate use of images / video footage | Policy and procedures in place Staff AUP policy |

| List of School Activities | The School has identified the following Risk of Harm | The School has the following Procedures in place to address risk identified in this assessment |
|---|---|--|
| Use of Information and Communication Technology by pupils in school | <p>Risk of harm to pupils inappropriately accessing/using computers, social media, phones and other devices while at school</p> <p>Risk of harm caused by member of school personnel communicating with pupils inappropriately via social media, texting, digital device or other manner</p> <p>Risk of harm caused by members of school personnel accessing/circulating inappropriate material via social media texting, digital device or other manner</p> <p>Staff not following policies & procedures</p> | <p>ICT policy in respect of usage of ICT by pupils</p> <p>Anti-bullying policy</p> <p>Code of Behaviour</p> <p>Health and safety policy</p> |
| Online teaching and learning | Risk of harm due to inappropriate use of online remote teaching and learning platforms | The school has an Acceptable Use Policy in place which includes provision for online teaching and learning remotely |
| Use of tablet devices and smartphones in the classroom and in the course of the school day | Risk of harm associated with misuse, abuse of devices and the various associated technologies | The school has a whole school policy in place covering the use of tablet devices and smartphones in the classroom and during the school day as outlined in Circular 0038/2018 |
| People gaining access to school during the day | Harm to pupils | <p>Policy and procedures in place</p> <p>Health and safety policy</p> <p>Sign in policy in front office</p> <p>External doors locked during day</p> <p>Buzzer system to gain entry to school</p> |

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| People gaining access to school grounds during the day | Harm from other pupils, unknown adults on the playground | School gates at bac of school locked at 9.30 Fence around perimeter of school Back gates locked |
| Usage of Breakfast Club | Harm to pupils due to inadequate supervision of pupils on way to and from Breakfast Club | Supervision policy |
| After/Before school activities | Risk of harm to pupils due to inadequate supervision of pupils while attending out of school activities Risk of harm to pupils by member of school personnel, member of staff of another organisation, or other person while child participating in activities | Policy and procedures in place Supervision policy |

| List of School Activities | The School has identified the following Risk of Harm | The School has the following Procedures in place to address risk identified in this assessment |
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| Holiday Provision | Risk of harm to pupils due to inadequate supervision of pupils while attending out of school activities Risk of harm to pupils by member of school personnel, member of staff of another organisation, or other person while child participating in activities | Policy and procedures in place Supervision policy |
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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.

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

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

Important Note: It should be noted that risk in the context of this risk assessment is the risk of “harm” as defined in the Children First Act, 2015 and not general health and safety risk. The definition of harm is set out in chapter 4 of the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017.