

Child Safeguarding Statement 2021 - 2022

Mountrath Community School



Ratified by the BOM –
11th October 2021

Next Review October 2022

Child Safeguarding Statement

Mountrath Community School is a post-primary school providing post-primary education to pupils from First Year to Leaving Certificate Year.

In accordance with the requirements of the Children First Act 2015, Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017, the 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 **Mountrath Community 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 **Kathryn O'Brien**

- 3 The Deputy Designated Liaison Person (Deputy DLP) is **Monica White**

- 4 The Board of Management recognises that child protection and welfare considerations permeate all aspects of school life and must be reflected in all of the school's policies, procedures, practices and activities. In its policies, procedures, practices and activities, the school will adhere to the following principles of best practice in child protection and welfare:

The school will:

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

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

- 5 The following procedures/measures are in place:
 - In relation to any member of staff who is the subject of any investigation (howsoever described) in respect of any act, omission or circumstance in respect of a child attending the school, the school adheres to the relevant procedures set out in Chapter 7 of the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017 and to the relevant agreed disciplinary procedures for school staff which are published on the DES website.

- In relation to the selection or recruitment of staff and their suitability to work with children, the school adheres to the statutory vetting requirements of the National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Acts 2012 to 2016 and to the wider duty of care guidance set out in relevant Garda vetting and recruitment circulars published by the DES and available on the DES website.
- In relation to the provision of information and, where necessary, instruction and training, to staff in respect of the identification of the occurrence of harm (as defined in the 2015 Act) the school-
 - Has provided each member of staff with a copy of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement
 - Ensures all new staff are provided with a copy of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement
 - Ensures each staff member signs a declaration that they have read the policy
 - Ensures all new staff provide a copy of their Child Protection Cert which is kept in a safe and secure location
 - 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 the child safeguarding statement.
- All registered teachers employed by the school are mandated persons under the Children First Act 2015.
- In accordance with the Children First Act 2015, the Board has carried out an assessment of any potential for harm to a child while attending the school or participating in school activities. A written assessment setting out the areas of risk identified and the school's procedures for managing those risks is attached as an appendix to these procedures.
- The various procedures referred to in this Statement can be accessed via the school's website, the DES website or will be made available on request by the school.

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

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

This Child Safeguarding Statement was adopted by the Board of Management on **11th October 2021**

Signed: *Mary Kavanagh*

Chairperson of Board of Management

Signed: *Kathryn O'Brien*

Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management

Date: 11th October 2021

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Checklist for Review of the Child Safeguarding Statement

Mountrath Community School

The *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017* require the Board of Management must undertake a review of its Child Safeguarding Statement and that the following checklist shall be used for this purpose. The review must be completed every year or as soon as practicable after there has been a material change in any matter to which the Child Safeguarding Statement refers. Undertaking an annual review will also ensure that a school also meets its statutory obligation under section 11(8) of the Children First Act 2015, to review its Child Safeguarding Statement every two years.

The checklist is designed as an aid to conducting this review and is not intended as an exhaustive list of the issues to be considered. Individual Boards of Management shall include other items in the checklist that are of relevance to the school in question.

As part of the overall review process, Boards of Management should also assess relevant school policies, procedures, practices and activities vis a vis their adherence to the principles of best practice in child protection and welfare as set out in the school's Child Safeguarding Statement, the Children First Act 2015 and the *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017*.

	Yes/No
1. Has the Board formally adopted a Child Safeguarding Statement in accordance with the 'Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools 2017'?	√
2. As part of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement, has the Board formally adopted, without modification, the 'Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools 2017'?	√
3. Does the school's Child Safeguarding Statement include a written assessment of risk as required under the Children First Act 2015?	√
4. Has the Board reviewed and updated where necessary the written assessment of risk as part of this overall review?	√
5. Has the DLP attended available child protection training?	√
6. Has the Deputy DLP attended available child protection training?	√
7. Have any members of the Board attended child protection training?	√
8. Are there both a DLP and a Deputy DLP currently appointed?	√
9. Are the relevant contact details (Tusla and An Garda Síochána) to hand?	√
10. Has the Board arrangements in place to communicate the school's Child Safeguarding Statement to new school personnel?	√
11. Is the Board satisfied that all school personnel have been made aware of their responsibilities under the 'Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools 2017' and the Children First Act 2015?	√
12. Has the Board received a Principal's Child Protection Oversight Report at each Board meeting held since the last review was undertaken?	√
13. Since the Board's last review, was the Board informed of any child protection reports made to Tusla/An Garda Síochána by the DLP?	√
14. Since the Board's last review, was the Board informed of any cases where the DLP sought advice from Tusla/and as a result of this advice, no report to the HSE was made?	√
15. Since the Board's last review, was the Board informed of any cases where an allegation of abuse or neglect was made against any member of school personnel?	No
16. Has the Board been provided with and reviewed all documents relevant to the Principal's Child Protection Oversight Report?	√
17. Is the Board satisfied that the child protection procedures in relation to the making of reports to Tusla/An Garda Síochána were appropriately followed in each case reviewed?	√

18. Is the Board satisfied that, since the last review, all appropriate actions are being or have been taken in respect of any member of school personnel against whom an allegation of abuse or neglect has been made?*	√
19. Were child protection matters reported to the Board appropriately recorded in the Board minutes?	√
20. Is the Board satisfied that all records relating to child protection are appropriately filed and stored securely?	√
21. Has the Board been notified by any parent in relation to that parent not receiving the standard notification required under section 5.6 of the 'Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools 2017'?	NO
22. In relation to any cases identified at question 21 above, has the Board ensured that any notifications required section 5.6 of the 'Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools 2017' were subsequently issued by the DLP?	√
23. Has the Board ensured that the Parents' Association (if any), has been provided with the school's Child Safeguarding Statement?	√
24. Has the Board ensured that the patron has been provided with the school's Child Safeguarding Statement?	√
25. Has the Board ensured that the school's Child Safeguarding Statement is available to parents on request?	√
26. Has the Board ensured that the Stay Safe programme is implemented in full in the school? (applies to primary schools)	Not applicable
27. Has the Board ensured that the Wellbeing Programme for Junior Cycle students is implemented in full in the school? (applies to post- primary schools)	√
28. Has the Board ensured that the SPHE curriculum is implemented in full in the school?	Yes
29. Is the Board satisfied that the statutory requirements for Garda Vetting have been met in respect of all school personnel (employees and volunteers)? *	√
30. Is the Board satisfied that the Department's requirements in relation to the provision of a child protection related statutory declaration and associated form of undertaking have been met in respect of persons appointed to teaching and non-teaching positions?*	√
31. Is the Board satisfied that, from a child protection perspective, thorough recruitment and selection procedures are applied by the school in relation to all school personnel (employees and volunteers)?*	√
32. Has the Board considered and addressed any complaints or suggestions for improvements regarding the school's Child Safeguarding Statement?	√
33. Has the Board sought the feedback of parents in relation to the school's compliance with the requirements of the child safeguarding requirements of the 'Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools 2017'?	No
34. Has the Board sought the feedback of pupils in relation to the school's child safeguarding arrangements?	No
35. Is the Board satisfied that the 'Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools 2017' are being fully and adequately implemented by the school?	√
36. Has the Board identified any aspects of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement and/or its implementation that require further improvement?	YES 33 and 34 above
37. Has the Board put in place an action plan containing appropriate timelines to address those aspects of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement and/or its implementation that have been identified as requiring further improvement ?	√
38. 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?	√

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

Signed *Mary Kavanagh*

Date **11th October 2021**

Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed *Monica White*

Date **11th October 2021**

Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management

Notification regarding the Board of Management's review of the Child Safeguarding Statement

To: _____

The Board of Management of **Mountrath Community School** 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 11th October 2021
- This review was conducted in accordance with the "Checklist for Review of the Child Safeguarding Statement" published on the Department's 'website www.education.ie

Signed *Mary Kavanagh*

Date **11th October 2021**

Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed *Kathryn O'Brien*

Date **11th October 2021**

Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management

The next review will take place at the start of the school year 2022-2023