

Scoil Íosagáin
Upperchurch NS



Child Safeguarding Statement

Scoil Íosagáin Upperchurch NS 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 2017 and Tusla Guidance on the preparation of Child Safeguarding Statements, the Board of Management of Scoil Íosagáin Upperchurch NS 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 Alma Quinn, Principal
- 3 The Deputy Designated Liaison Person (Deputy DLP) is Sinéad Butler, Acting Deputy Principal
- 4 The Board of Management recognises that child protection and welfare considerations permeate all aspects of school life and must be reflected in all of the school's policies, procedures, practices and activities. In its policies, procedures, practices and activities, the school will adhere to the following principles of best practice in child protection and welfare:

The school will:

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

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 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 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 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 this 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.
- The staff and board of management of Scoil Íosagáin have identified the following as areas of specific concern in relation to child protection. Following discussion and consultation the staff and board of management have agreed that the following practices be adopted:

a) Physical contact:

Physical contact between school personnel and the child should always be in response to the needs of the child and not the needs of the adult.

While physical contact may be used to comfort, reassure or assist a child the following should be factors in determining its appropriateness:-

- It is acceptable to the child
- It is open and not secretive
- The age and developmental stage of the child

School personnel should avoid doing anything of a personal nature for children that they can do for themselves.

b) School Sports Coach/School Volunteers

The school adheres to the requirements of the Garda Vetting Legislation and relevant DES Circulars in relation to recruitment and Garda Vetting.

c) Visitors / Guest Speakers/Workshop Facilitators/External Sports Coaches

Visitors/guest speakers should never be left alone with pupils. The school (principal/teachers) has a responsibility to check out the credentials of the visitor/guest speaker and to ensure that the material in use by guests is appropriate.

d) Children with specific toileting/intimate care needs:

In all situations where a pupil needs assistance with toileting /intimate care a meeting will be convened, after enrolment and before the child starts school, between parents/guardians, class teacher, special needs assistant, principal and if appropriate the pupil . The purpose of the meeting will be to ascertain the specific needs of the child and to determine how the school can best meet those needs. The staff to be involved in this care will be identified and provision will be made for occasions when the particular staff involved are absent. A written copy of what has been agreed will be made and kept in the child’s file.

The identified member of staff will be present when dealing with intimate care/ toileting needs following agreement from all parties. Any deviation from the agreed procedure will be recorded and notified to the DLP and the parents/guardians.

e) Toileting accidents:

Clean underwear and suitable clothing will be kept in the school so that if a pupil has an ‘accident’ of this nature they will in the first instance be offered fresh clothing into which they can change.

If the pupil for whatever reason cannot clean or change themselves and the parents/guardians cannot be contacted the child will be assisted by members of staff familiar to the child. In all such situations two members of staff should be present if possible.

A record of all such incidents will be kept in the incident book and principal and parents will be notified. Parental consent regarding toileting accidents is included as part of the enrolment form.

f) One- to One teaching:

It is the policy in this school that one-to-one teaching is often in the best interest of the child. Every effort will be made to ensure that when SEN pupils are attending the Special Education Teacher (SET), they will be taught in pairs/small groups or the SET teacher may teach them in their classroom as part of a team-teaching approach. However when one-to-one teaching is deemed to be in the best interest of the child, every effort will be made to ensure that this teaching takes place in an open environment. i.e. open doors, table between teacher/SNA and pupil (where possible), glass in door. Parents of children who are involved in one-to-one teaching will be informed and their agreement sought.

Work carried out by special needs assistants will be carried out under the direction of the class teacher in an open environment. i.e. open doors, table between teacher/SNA and pupil (where possible), glass in door.

g) Changing for Games/ PE/ Swimming/Christmas Concert/Halloween Hooley/Matches:

Pupils will be expected to dress and undress themselves for all the above. Where assistance is needed with changing for games/ PE/swimming/ Christmas concert/Halloween Hooley/matches etc this will be done in the communal areas and with the consent of parents. Consent will be sought for all new entrants on the enrolment form. Under no circumstances will members of staff/ volunteers be expected to or allowed to dress/undress a child in a cubicle/private area. In such situations where privacy is required the parent/guardian of the child will be asked to assist the child.

At all times there must be adequate supervision of pupils.

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 incident should be made and reported to principal and parents.

h) Accidents/emergencies occurring away from school grounds (school matches, school tours etc):

- In the event of a serious injury, the teacher will first contact the emergency services and then the school. A teacher, assigned by rota (person on first yard duty/morning duty) or member of the SEN team, will then be sent to the venue to accompany the remaining children back to school.
- The school will notify parents of the injured child.
- The teacher present will accompany the injured child to the hospital.
- In the meantime, if the teacher present has to leave the venue before the designated teacher arrives, the GAA coach/SNA will supervise the remaining children in the interim.
- In so far as is possible, 2 adults will attend all matches.

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 incident should be made and reported to principal and parents.

h) Procedure for Use of toilets by pupils in yard at break/lunch time:

- When a child requests to go indoors to use the toilet at break/lunch they must seek permission from the teacher on duty.

Note: Pupils use their own classroom toilets and enter the school through the allocated entry/exit door for their own classroom. Pupils must inform the supervising teacher on return to the yard.

Otherwise, access to the school from the yard is not permitted by pupils during break times.

i) Procedure for Dismissal of pupils in evenings:

- Teachers supervise pupils walking from classroom to bus yard. Pupils are regularly reminded to walk in an orderly fashion to the bus car park and when approaching the school buses.

j) Procedure for Administration of First Aid:

- When administering First Aid indoors to a pupil, usually in the office/5th-6th Classroom, it will be carried out in an open environment i.e. open doors, another adult present where possible.

- k) Procedure for pupils attending church as altar servers for Funerals & Weddings:
- Parents are contacted for consent by Priest/School Secretary/Class Teacher.
 - As parents are not normally available to transport pupils to the church, an SNA/School Secretary accompanies pupils on foot to the church before the ceremony.
 - Pupils are signed in on arrival at the church sacristy.
 - Pupils are collected after the ceremony and escorted on foot back to the school by SNA/School Secretary.

l) Access to school/visitors to the school:

In line with best practice in schools regarding Child Safeguarding, all persons who visit the school must report to the secretary by phoning/emailing the school office in advance or by alerting the office through the intercom/buzzer system at the front door. (up to 2.30pm each day) This includes: parents, guardians, childminders, sales reps, maintenance contractors, all visitors to the school. If parents need to drop/collect pupils for appointments or other reasons, they can do so by contacting the school office in advance through Aladdin Connect/by phone/by email. The school secretary will escort pupils to/from their classroom.

- 6 This statement has been published on the school's website and has been provided to all members of school personnel, the Parents' Association and the patron. It is readily accessible to parents and guardians on request. A copy of this Statement will be made available to Túsla 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 Feb. 13th 2023.

This Child Safeguarding Statement was reviewed by the Board of Management on Feb 13th 2023.

Signed: P. J. Harrington
Chairperson of Board of Management

Signed: Alma Quinn
Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management

Date: 13th Feb '23

Date: 13.2.2023