

Reviewed by BOM
22/02/2024

Child Safeguarding Statement



Scoil Náisiúnta Droichead an Chláir



Clarecastle N.S. Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment

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Child Safeguarding Statement

Clarecastle National School 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 **Clarecastle National 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 (revised 2023)* as part of this overall Child Safeguarding Statement
- 2 The Designated Liaison Person (DLP) is **Mr. M.J. Malone**
- 3 The Deputy Designated Liaison Person (Deputy DLP) is **Ms. Barbara Hassett**
- 4 The Relevant Person is **Mr. M.J. Malone**
(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 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.

- 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 (revised 2023)* and to the relevant agreed disciplinary procedures for school staff which are published on the gov.ie 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 gov.ie 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 (revised 2023)*, including in the case of registered teachers, those in relation to mandated reporting under the Children First Act 2015.
- 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 gov.ie 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 **22nd February 2024**.

This Child Safeguarding Statement was reviewed by the Board of Management on **22nd February 2024**.

Signed: 
Chairperson of Board of Management

Signed: 
Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management

Date: 22-2-2024

Date: 22-2-24

Child Safeguarding Risk Assessment

Written Assessment of Risk of Clarecastle National 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 (revised 2023)*, the following is the Written Risk Assessment of **Clarecastle National School**.

1. List of school activities

1. Training of school personnel in Child Protection matters.
2. Daily arrival and dismissal of pupils.
3. Recreation breaks for pupils.
4. Hand-over of children to an appointed adult at Infant collection time (1.45pm).
5. After-school clubs/Childcare providers.
6. Late drop-offs, early collection, late pick up, attendance
7. Classroom teaching.
8. One to one teaching and counselling.
9. Application of sanctions under the school's Code of Behaviour including detention of pupils, confiscation of phones etc.
10. School-based bullying, verbal, physical or psychological.
11. Management of challenging behaviour amongst pupils, including appropriate use of restraint where required
12. Administration of First Aid
13. Administration of Medicine
14. Care of pupils with specific vulnerabilities/ needs such as
 - Pupil 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
 - Children in care
 - Children on CPNS
15. Participation by pupils in religious ceremonies/religious instruction external to the school.
16. Toilet Areas
17. Information Communication Technology and other digital devices.
18. Remote Learning/Online Teaching
19. Storage or publication of photos of children
20. Data protection
21. Use of video/photography/other media to record school events
22. Interaction with visitors to the school/external coaches.
23. Student teachers undertaking training placement in school
24. Students participating in work experience
25. Use of the school premises by outside groups/individuals.
26. Children not collected from after school activities
27. Lack of, or insufficient lunch
28. School transport arrangements
29. Parental Involvement in school activities.

- | | |
|-----|---|
| 30. | Sporting Activities and Annual Sports Day |
| 31. | Use of off-site facilities for school activities |
| 32. | Use of external coaches/instructors during off-site activities. |
| 33. | Intimate Care. |

2. **The school has identified the following risk of harm in respect of its activities -**

- | | |
|-----|---|
| 1. | Harm not recognised or reported promptly. |
| 2. | Risk of child being harmed in the school by another child.
Risk of child being harmed in the school by another adult.
Risk of harm not being recognized by school staff |
| 3. | Risk of child being harmed in the school by another child.
Risk of child being harmed in the school by another adult.
Risk of harm not being recognized by school staff |
| 4. | Risk of child being harmed in the school by another adult.
Risk of harm not being recognized by school staff |
| 5. | Risk of child being harmed in the school by another child.
Risk of child being harmed in the school by another adult. |
| 6. | Risk of child being harmed in the school by another adult. |
| 7. | Harm by school personnel
Harm from other pupils |
| 8. | Risk of harm in one-to-one situation. |
| 9. | Harm by school personnel |
| 10. | Risk of harm due to bullying of child |
| 11. | Harm by school personnel |
| 12. | Risk of child being harmed in the school by another adult. |
| 13. | Risk of child being harmed in the school by another adult. |
| 14. | Harm by school personnel
Harm from other pupils
Harm from adults at the venue |
| 15. | Harm from other pupils
Harm from other adults |
| 16. | Inappropriate behaviour |
| 17. | Risk of harm due to children inappropriately accessing/using computers, social media, phones and other devices while at school. |
| 18. | Risk of harm due to children inappropriately accessing/using computers, social media, phones and other devices while accessing school work/supports/ online lessons. |
| 19. | Risk of pupil images being accessed and used inappropriately. |
| 20. | Risk of personnel information regarding pupils being accessed and used inappropriately. |
| 21. | Bullying
Harm from adults
Harm from other pupils |
| 22. | Risk of child being harmed in the school by another adult.
Risk of harm not being recognized by school staff |
| 23. | Risk of child being harmed in the school by another adult |
| 24. | Risk of child being harmed in the school by another adult. |
| 25. | Risk from other adults |
| 26. | Risk from other pupils |

- Risk from other adults
- 27. Child at risk of neglect
- 28. Risk of child being harmed in the school by another adult.
- 29. Risk of child being harmed in the school by another adult.
- 30. Harm by school personnel
Harm from other pupils,
Harm from other adults at the venue
- 31. Harm from other adults at the venue
Harm from other pupils
- 32. Harm from unknown adults at the venue
- 33. Risk of harm by a member of school personnel

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

1.
 - Clarecastle National School's Child Safeguarding Statement, Clarecastle National School Child Safeguarding Risk Assessment & Department of Education & Skills procedures are made available to all staff.
 - Staff members will acknowledge receipt of Clarecastle National School's Child Safeguarding Statement, Clarecastle National School Child Safeguarding Risk Assessment in writing.
 - Staff members will acknowledge, in writing, that they are aware of their responsibility to be familiar with and implement consistently, the contents of Clarecastle National School's Child Safeguarding Statement, Clarecastle National School Child Safeguarding Risk Assessment.
 - BOM records all records of staff and board training

2.

As detailed in our school **Supervision Policy:**

 - The BOM has a suitable yard/playground supervision rota (commencing at 8.50am for assembly and finishing at 2.55pm for dismissal) to ensure appropriate supervision of children during, assembly and dismissal and recreation breaks.
 - All adults are required to report to reception prior to entering the school building.
 - Front entrance to the school has a magnetic lock so visitors must be provided with access by a staff member.
 - Entrance from the reception area to the main school area has a magnetic lock so visitors must be provided with access by a staff member.

- Parents of pupils in classes from Rang 1 to Rang 6 must ensure they have satisfactory arrangements in place for the collection of pupils once they leave the school grounds at the end of the school day.

3.

In line with our School **Health & Safety Policy**:

- The school has a suitable yard/playground supervision roster for both teaching staff and SNA's to ensure appropriate supervision of children during recreation breaks.
- Appointed adults wishing to collect a pupil during recreation time must report to reception and are not permitted to enter the school yard.

4

- Names and contact numbers of adults who have permission to collect each child are provided by parents at the beginning of each year and stored on our school online data-base.
- Children are lined up in the school corridor and released to their appointed adult.
- If an unknown adult comes to collect a child (e.g. a family friend, an aunt/uncle, a cousin, etc.) and the school has not been informed beforehand by a parent, the class teacher calls the parents to confirm the child has permission to go with that adult.
- In the event of being unable to contact the parent or nominated emergency contact the child will not be permitted to leave the school in the company of the adult.
- If an adult appears to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol when they come to collect a child from school, they are not released by the class teacher. This would then be reported to the DLP or DDLP immediately.

5.

In line with our school's **Use of the School Premises Policy**:

- Individuals/groups using the facilities of Clarecastle NS are required to put procedures in place to ensure that all children in their care are properly supervised at all times. This includes the supervision and care of pupils waiting beforehand and waiting to be collected afterwards.
- Responsibility lies solely with the individual/Group using the premises for communicating with Parents about Starting/Finishing times, Cancellations or re-scheduling. A contact number should be provided to parents.

- Children are collected and supervised by personnel from the relevant childcare Providers who are required to have suitable vetting.
- Childcare providers are required to provide the names of individuals who will be collecting pupils.

6.

- In line with our **School Attendance Policy**:
- Latecomers must be signed in by an adult from 9.05am onwards. Adults are not permitted to accompany latecomers to class.
- Early Leavers must be signed out by an appointed adult. The appointed adult must wait in the reception area while the child is called over the public address system.
- Significant concerns in relation to timekeeping are reported to the Education Welfare Officer.
- Children's attendance at school will be monitored with an explanation required for any missed days.
- Significant attendance concerns are reported to the Education Welfare Officer by means of individual referral.

7.

- All school staff will be supplied with a hard copy of the school **Child Safeguarding Statement and Child Safeguarding Risk Assessment**.
- Glass viewing panels installed in all doors.
- Glass viewing panels will not be obstructed in any way.

8.

- Parents are informed and provide written consent if children are withdrawn from class on a regular basis.
- Glass panels are installed in the doors of all classrooms in the school.
- Glass panels will not be obscured in any way.
- Window blinds, where fitted, will remain open during pupil contact time.

9.

In line with school **Policy on Detention of Pupils** and the **School Code of Behaviour**:

- In line with the school Code of Behaviour and Policy on Detention of Pupils, detention of pupils during recreation breaks may be used as a sanction for negative behavior. During detention periods pupils will be supervised by the Principal or other appointed staff member.

In line with school **Policy on Use of Mobile Phones**:

- Any pupil found in possession of a phone during the school day will have the phone confiscated and it will remain so until it is collected, in person, by a parent/guardian.

10.

The school **Anti Bullying Policy** is available to all staff on the Drive.

- Anti-bullying policies on our school website to inform parents.
- Promotion of a culture of openness and respect in which students can approach staff to discuss concerns and worries.
- Adequate supervision is provided to ensure codes of behaviour is being followed.

11.

As outlined in **Department of Education & Skills Primary Circular 02/05** some pupils with serious difficulties may require more urgent action.

- Should these cases present, they will, with parent / guardian permission, be discussed with the relevant Special Needs Education Officer (SENO) and/or NEPS psychologist.
- This may lead to a more detailed behavioural management programme being implemented at home and or in class or to a referral for further specialist assessment.
- SNAs and support teachers will follow educational plans for these particular students.
- Intervention plans will be agreed with the parents / guardians.
- The school will engage the services of the **Special Education Support Services (SESS)** to support teaching and non teaching staff when required.

12.

In line with our school **Accident & Injury Policy:**

- All staff will exercise their duty of care to pupils for the duration of the school day.

In the event of Accident or Injury to a pupil:

- Minor accidents/injuries will be treated by the relevant staff member in the presence/view of other pupil/s.
- Accidents/injuries that involve treatment of minor cuts, bumps etc that are not exposed will be treated in the presence of another staff member.

13.

In line with our school **Administration of Medicines Policy:**

- Members of staff may administer medication to pupils only in cases where an indemnity form has been signed by the parents and agreed by the Principal/Chairperson of the Board of Management.

14.

In line with our school **Mission Statement:**

- Clarecastle National School will be welcoming and caring towards the needs of pupils with specific vulnerabilities.
- In as far as is possible the pupil and parents will be involved in identification of his/her personal requirements, wishes, etc.
- A written copy of any parental agreement that exists on matters will be kept on the pupils enrolment file.
- Parents will be notified of any changes from agreed procedures.
- At all times the dignity and privacy of the pupil will be paramount.

Practices and procedures in this regard are detailed in various school policies such as

- Code of Behaviour
- Anti Bullying Policy
- Anti Cyber Bullying Policy
- S.P.H.E Policy

- Supervision policy
- Mobile Phones Policy
- Acceptable Usage Policy
- School Tours Policy

15.

In line with our school **Supervision Policy:**

- Pupils will not be permitted to make their way to the church unaccompanied.
- Teachers will ensure there is effective supervision at all times both en route to and in the church.
- Where ceremonies are conducted outside of school time it is parents responsibility to ensure that there are suitable arrangements in place for getting pupils to and from the event location.
- Where ceremonies take place as part of a scheduled mass outside of school time it is parents responsibility to ensure that their child/children are adequately supervised and that suitable arrangements are in place for getting pupils to and from the ceremony.

16.

During pupil contact time:

- Class teachers will supervise pupil's use of toilet facilities.
- Only one pupil at a time permitted in the class toilets.

During recreation breaks:

- Pupils must get permission from the teacher on yard duty to enter the school to use their class toilet.
- Only one pupil at a time permitted in class toilets.
- Pupils can only access the building through doors adjacent to their classroom.
- Teacher on indoor supervision duty to monitor pupils entering the building.

17.

- Access to internet is filtered by the PDST Technology in Education. All Filtering Levels are designed to block content of an illegal or pornographic content. Our school has a level 4 filtering setting which allows access to YouTube but blocks websites that are categorized as Personal such as blogs and Social Networking such as Instagram and Face book.

In line with our school's **Acceptable Usage Policy:**

- Internet sessions will always be supervised by a teacher. If there is no teacher in the room, access to the Internet is prohibited.
- Pupils are not permitted to use personal devices in school unless they are requested to bring same to school by a member of the teaching staff for use during school for educational purposes, as referenced in school's Personal Internet Enabled Devices Policy.
- See **Acceptable Usage Policy** for more details.

18.

- On occasion remote teaching and learning may be necessary. In circumstances where teaching cannot be conducted on the school premises, teachers may use Zoom, SeeSaw, e-mail or other platforms approved by the Principal, to assist with remote teaching, as necessary.

In line with our school's **Acceptable Usage Policy:**

- The school has signed up to the terms of service of the Online Platforms in use by the school. The School has enabled the most up to date security and privacy features which these Online Platforms provide.
- Rules and guidelines for staff, pupils and parents/ guardians for using online communications are detailed and communicated.
- See **Acceptable Usage Policy** for more details.

19.

In line with the school **Data Protection Policy:**

- Parental consent to take photos of children is obtained by the school on enrolment.
- Class teachers are made aware of any children in his or her class who do not have permission to be in school photos

- Photos taken by staff are removed from personal devices at the end of each school day.
- Photos are stored securely on the school online storage space.
- Children's names are not published with photos uploaded to the school website or class blogs.
- Children are not permitted to use electronic devices (e.g. iPads, cameras, personal devices) unless under the supervision of an adult and for educational purposes.
- Children are not permitted to use camera phones/digital devices during the school day or at school events

20.

In line with the school's **Data Protection Policy:**

- Confidential documents relating to children in the school are stored securely in the school.
- Hard copies are stored in locked filing cabinets in the strong room.
- Soft copies are stored in a secure online database. A password is required to access the documents.

21.

It is school policy that:

- Parents will be informed twice yearly that any photographs or videos of school events or school related events taken by parents or other individuals are for private, personal use only.
- Photographs or videos of school events or school related events taken by parents or other individuals must not be uploaded to any website to be viewed by others (e.g. Face book).

22.

- Visitors and external coaches must check in at reception at the front entrance before accessing the main school building.
- Regular visitors to the school, e.g. external teachers, guest speakers are vetted and a copy of their vetting (either hard copy or digital) will be provided to the school.

- Persons administering external programmes (e.g. GAA coaches etc) through another body will provide the school with confirmation of vetting from their relevant organization and a copy of any appropriate insurance.

In line with our school's **Health and Safety Statement:**

- Children are closely supervised by staff members during all school events in which visitors are invited to or are **present** in the school.

23.

In line with our school **Policy on Students on Teaching Placement:**

Prior to accepting a student on teaching placement it is the responsibility of said student to provide the school with:

- Written verification that the placement is supported by and indemnified by the college in which the student is attending.
- Confirmation that Clarecastle National Schools vetting obligations (as per DES circular 31/2016) will be complied with in advance_of commencing teaching placement.
- Teachers to remain with the class at all times.

24.

In line with our school **Policy on Students on Work Experience:**

- The school requires confirmation from the school college, in writing, that Clarecastle National Schools vetting obligations (as per DES circular 31/2016) will be complied with in advance_of commencing work placement.
- Students must be able to provide current NVB vetting documentation which should be processed in **advance** of placement start date through the student's post-primary school or the relevant colleges.
- Due to current legislation the school will not offer work experience/TY placement to students who cannot meet vetting obligations.

25.

- Access to the school will not be granted to any outside group for use during the school day, from 9.00am to 2.45pm.

In line with our school's **Use of the School Premises Policy:**

- In the event of individuals/groups using the school premises outside of school hours where there will be unrestricted access to children, it is essential that those who have said access provide evidence of up-to-date vetting to the BOM.

26.

In line with our school **Use of the School Premises Policy and Supervision Policy:**

- In the case of school related activities, all parents are made aware of the finishing time of activities and that pupils must be collected on time. If a pupil is not collected on time the teacher(s) in charge must make contact with the parents.
- In the event of a teacher being unable to make contact with either a parent or a nominated emergency contact, the teacher shall ring the TUSLA Duty Social Worker for advice, record details of same and take the appropriate action as advised.
- Individuals/groups using the facilities of Clarecastle National School are required to put procedures in place to ensure that all children in their care are properly supervised at all times. This includes the supervision and care of pupils waiting beforehand and waiting to be collected afterwards.
- Responsibility lies solely with the individual/Group using the premises for communicating with Parents about Starting/Finishing times, Cancellations or re-scheduling. A contact number should be provided to parents.

27.

- Teachers will monitor children's lunches and ensure that all children are provided with a sufficient quantity of healthy food each day.
- If a child is not provided with any lunch in school, the school phones the parents and asks them to bring the lunch to school.
- If a lunch is not provided the DLP or DDLP will be informed immediately and best efforts made to ensure the child is adequately fed throughout the day.
- If a child is regularly provided with insufficient lunch the class teacher discusses it with the parents in the first instance. If the situation does not improve the class teacher will take appropriate action to ensure resolution.

28.

In line with our school **Transport Policy:**

- The school will only use transport operators that have a "Road Passenger Transport Operators Licence".

Furthermore:

- Pupils will not be permitted to board or remain on a bus without teacher supervision.
- The school shall receive confirmation from any service provider that their employees are suitably vetted.

29.

- Where parents visit the school to take part or assist in school activities on a one off or irregular basis the responsibility for supervision and care of pupils rests with the relevant teacher.
- Where parents visit the school to take part or assist in school activities on regular basis they will be required to undergo vetting through Killaloe Diocesan Office.

30.

In line with our school **Supervision Policy and Health and Safety Policy:**

- All teachers will exercise their Duty of Care to pupils during sporting activities whether undertaken on site or off site.
- Teacher responsibilities in this regard are detailed in the aforementioned policies.

31.

In line with our school **Supervision Policy and Health and Safety Policy:**

- All teachers will exercise their Duty of Care to pupils during school activities whether undertaken on site or off site.
- Prior to the use of off-site facilities teachers will satisfy themselves as to the suitability of the venue.
- Teacher responsibilities in this regard are detailed in the aforementioned policies.

32.

In line with our school **Supervision Policy and Health and Safety Policy:**

- All teachers will exercise their Duty of Care to pupils during school activities undertaken off site.
- Organisers of off-site activities involving the use of external coaches/instructors must receive confirmation in writing from the host organisation that their coaches/instructors have suitable vetting.
- Teacher responsibilities in this regard are detailed in the aforementioned policies.

33.

In line with our school **Intimate Care Policy:**

- An Intimate Care Plan will be drawn up for each pupil requiring intimate care in consultation with parents.
- Staff members engaging in intimate care will inform the relevant class teacher of their intention to do so.
- Relevant staff members will maintain a record of instances where intimate care needs arise.

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 was reviewed by the Board of Management on [22/02/2024](#).

Signed Pat Bergin

Date: 22/02/2024

Mr. Pat Bergin

Chairperson of Board of Management

Signed MJ Malone

Date: 22/02/2024

Mr. MJ Malone

Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management